

# newdirections

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## May they all be one

John Twistleton on ecumenism

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- Jack Allen answers your questions
- The Sacrament of the Present Moment

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St Saviour’s, Eastbourne  
(Photo by Dr John Crook FSA)



Articles are published in *New Directions* because they are thought likely to be of interest to readers. They do not necessarily reflect the views of the Editor or those of *Forward in Faith*.

The Shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham has welcomed Fr Ben Bradshaw as Shrine Priest.

# All eyes to Rome

John Twisleton reports on Zooming to this summer's Petertide Seminars

The e-mail was relayed to me by a priest friend in the Society of the Holy Cross. It contained an invitation from Archbishop Ian, Director of The Anglican Centre in Rome, to attend their Petertide online interactive course subdivided into three sessions on Ecumenism, examining the work of the Anglican Roman Catholic International Commission (ARCIC) and the International Anglican-Roman Catholic Commission for Unity and Mission (IARCCUM). Consequently on three Monday afternoons I Zoomed to join 100 or so folk across the world to reflect on Anglican-RC relations and the roller coaster quest for visible unity.

## ARCIC from the beginning

Session one, on the Feast of SS Peter & Paul itself, was on the history of ARCIC I and II and the Lambeth Conference of 1988 with Old Testament scholar and ARCIC expert Dame Mary Tanner and Bishop Christopher Hill, co-secretary of ARCIC from 1974-81. The Bishop traced Anglican-RC dialogue back to the Malines Conversations when Westminster Chapters knelt in silence at St Edward's Shrine, a time when spoken prayer together was impossible. Then came Pope John XXIII with his distinction between the substance of Faith and the way it is presented and Vatican II's Constitution on Liturgy, Church, Ecumenism, Revelation and the Declaration on Religious Freedom. After meeting Anglican Metropolitans in Jerusalem, and a briefing by the illustrious Eric Mascall, Archbishop Michael Ramsey made his historic visit to Pope Paul VI 1966. The two established 'a serious dialogue which, founded on the Gospels and the ancient common traditions, may lead to that unity in truth for which Christ prayed.' In added symbolism the Pope gave Ramsey his Milan episcopal ring now worn by successive Archbishops of Canterbury. There followed a Commission on mixed marriages and ARCIC. Evangelical John Stott was asked to serve but deferred recommending his Curate Julian Charnley who was to play a key role with Dominican Jean Tillard shaping the 1971 Windsor Statement on Eucharistic Doctrine. They helped centre thinking on the unique priesthood of Christ and the objective gift of his presence, not just for the believer but with the believer. Agreements on Ministry and Ordination (1973) and Authority in the Church (1976, 1981) followed with separate elucidations. These set authority within the communion of the churches and treated the emergence of primacy with the Petrine ministry, the complementarity of primacy and conciliarity. There were elucidations later on struggling with the Pope's Infallibility and universal jurisdiction.

Having followed the story of ARCIC up to the Final Report (1982) with Bishop Hill and taken clarifications on his input from the worldwide audience, the broadcast switched to Mary Tanner who addressed the documents 'reception' linked to reform and renewal of ourselves as denominations. The 1980s were full of ecumenical conversations with Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry published by the Faith and Order

Commission of the World Council of Churches in Lima (1982). People expected the agreed documents would make a difference and pave the way to visible union. There was no agreement though on the forward process from the agreements. In that process churches learned about themselves as much as about the documents. At the 1988 Lambeth Conference Archbishop Runcie asked in his keynote whether his fellow bishops really wanted unity saying he did so himself. Fr Teilhard responded but there was no official RC response. The Conference welcomed the ARCIC proposals as 'consonant in substance' with the faith of Anglicans but there was no mention of concrete steps forward the need to weigh the ordination of women carefully in the light of ARCIC. At length the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith in Rome issued its heavy Observation in 1991 seeking more elucidation about eucharistic sacrifice, transubstantiation, the distinction between ministerial priesthood and that of the baptised and the need to agree fundamentals before looking at women's ordination.

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The second hour of each seminar involved participants engaging the speakers. It celebrated a movement of the Spirit through heartening stories of practical collaboration and raised much ecclesiology. Cardinal Cormac's talk heading 'Anglican-RC relations: dead in the water or money in the bank' was recalled, it being recognised that these Petertide seminars at least were part of 'spending the money'! Mary Tanner recalled the Gamaliel principle behind the 1988 Lambeth statement on female ordination, i.e. if it was of God it would prevail. I asked a question on the intra-Anglican divide on ordination between those who see it of the 'esse' of the Gospel and those who see it just as part of the practical 'bene esse'. Bishop Hill pointed to the necessity for ordination being retained in the Prayer Book and the practical sorting irregular practice after the 17th century Commonwealth. He mentioned a surprising fluidity in RC understanding of ordination with quite recent decisions on the relation between the presbyterate and episcopate.

## Anglican-RC relations - dead in the water or money in the bank?

Session two, on ARCIC II and III and the shifts in tensions and ecumenical mood, was led 13 July by Professor Nicholas Sagovsky, former canon theologian of Westminster Abbey and Mgr Mark Langham, former official of the Pontifical Council for the Promoting of Christian unity. Professor Sagovsky identified five ongoing issues: Anglican-RC marriages, Anglican orders, ordination of women as priests in the Anglican Communion, consecration of a gay man with a partner as bishop

and the consecration of women bishops. Are we Anglican priests and bishops just seen as laity by the RCs? Despite honours given to Anglican clerics, like the stole given to Henry Chadwick by Pope John Paul II, the same Pope presided over the 1998 reiteration of *Apostolicae Curiae* (1896) pronouncing the invalidity of Anglican orders. ARCIC, with its agreement on many aspects of the nature of Ministry, seemed to exist in a parallel universe. John Paul II stopped RC participation in ecumenical debate about the ordination of women which he saw as schismatic compared to how many Anglicans see it as a Gospel imperative. Intra-Anglican splits on female ordination and same sex marriage have made Anglican-RC debate much harder as RCs wonder who speaks for the Anglican tradition. Nevertheless none of our disagreements stop us saying the Nicene Creed together, or our having the same scriptures and baptism. In points of clarification admission of the non-baptised to the eucharist in the Diocese of New Westminster, Vancouver linked to Lutheran understanding was raised as yet another stumbling block for RC-Anglican relations.

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### **ARCIC is forced to proceed in a theological fashion but being international has not been good at picking up on local dialogues and concerns and has no mechanism for doing so.**

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Monsignor Mark Langham continued with informal heading 'Behind the statements, the role of instinct and nuance in receiving ARCIC.' He mentioned recent images of Archbishops Justin and Vincent kneeling in prayer in Westminster Cathedral and Abbey on the day the buildings were reopened as part of lifting lockdown due to COVID-19. In lockdown the Church of England announced churches would be closed even for clergy, contrasting with the RC Church saying priests would continue in church. The decision to abandon sacred buildings is more unthinkable in RC circles showing differences about our sense of the sacred. ARCIC stresses what unites us is greater than what divides and sets forth common faith empowering us towards visible union. RC-Orthodox dialogue seems strangely more difficult. There has been an unlearning of erroneous assumptions over the last 20 years with growth in camaraderie which has left some dialogue leaders suspected by their own constituency eg betrayal on authority and Mary have been claimed in General Synod debate. Getting behind entrenched attitudes is difficult and the ARCIC process has reached a degree of self-awareness here. Meanwhile the refusal of bishops to celebrate with one another at Lambeth 2008 weakens capacity for ecumenical dialogue. In 2015 two bishops ordained separately within a week, male traditionalist and female, were photographed together illustrating a difficult ambiguity. Recent Anglican-Methodist dialogue seems vague about the continuity of episcopal ordination. RC thinking of the church also has its tensions between licit local variations and the universal aspiration to be the sacrament of salvation for all. Post Vatican II emotive blog posts with papal

tiaras, ostrich feathers etc and those pushing for women's ordination show RCs need to agree to disagree more amicably. Anglicans might need to see the limitations of magnanimity and comprehensiveness. We are invited to listen to our fears about one another, heeding instinctive visceral reactions as over Pope and Mary, to get to know one another better beyond grand gestures by leaders. Supporting ARCIC is going on a journey in which you do not leave your Anglicanism or Catholicism behind but see them enriched, even if people see you differently. The documents are good enough, rich enough in their thinking, to face long term scrutiny and they have had as yet brief attention by few people.

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### **In 2016 the Pope and Archbishop held a week's conference with Anglican-RC Bishop pairs committed to be pilgrim companions, handing on peace, mercy and justice.**

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These were some points raised in the second hour of the seminar: The theological method of ARCIC is alien to both bodies. ARCIC is forced to proceed in a theological fashion but being international has not been good at picking up on local dialogues and concerns and has no mechanism for doing so. Powerful gestures do energise the ecumenical venture - archbishops praying together, sharing of stoles. So does joint evangelisation - there is an ecumenism of necessity since witness is weakened by our standing apart. Pope Francis is attempting decentralisation with a move towards Anglican synodality yet there is an imbalance between RC unity and doctrine commissions. Francis calling himself Bishop of Rome is a welcome gesture to Anglicans. Re-read 'The Gift of Authority' and you see Pope Francis fitting the bill and also fulfilling Pope John Paul II *Ut Unum Sint*'s invitation for ideas on renewing papal ministry. On Intercommunion, the RC view of Communion is a declaration of both who I am and what I think the Church is. Saying Amen in receiving means I affirm belonging to this communion of faith, the whole body of Catholic doctrine. Anglicans do not realise how strong Communion is for RCs. Behind receiving is the acceptance of a whole way of being a Christian. Reception of ARCIC links to other bilateral or multilateral dialogues. When something is not part of my daily experience should I fear it or welcome its possibility for enrichment - this is why the ARCIC title was *The Gift of Authority*. Understanding visceral attitudes: 'the only metaphysical doctrine the English have ever invented is no-Popery!' (Norman St John Stevas). Might this have converted into Brexit since underneath Brexit is an echo of the Reformation, Self-awareness of the British: we are a great nation because we stand alone. Pope Francis is picking up language on Synodality from Anglicanism with planned 2022 gathering on that theme. Yet RC centralising movement to guarantee doctrine and dogma is very real.

#### **Looking forward with IARCCUM**

Session three on 27 July on the establishment of International Anglican-Roman Catholic Commission for Unity and Mission

(IARCCUM) was led by its co-presidents RC Archbishop Donald Bolen of Regina, Canada and Anglican Bishop David Hamid, fellow Canadian, suffragan bishop in Europe.

Bishop Hamid described the origin of IARCCUM with its telling logo of a Rome mosaic of two birds gathered at a pool of water viz two churches seeking renewal of the grace of baptism. Besides the theological (ARCIC) and practical marriage commissions there has been closer collaboration between bishops since Archbishop Carey and Pope John Paul II met in 1996. This led to the birth of IARCCUM in 2001 with a public signing planned to affirm a new 'plateau' being reached after the churches had walked together over 30 years. There was an issue about who would sign for Anglicans - all 38 Primates? In the event this signing was abandoned in the wake of the ordination of Gene Robinson, bishop in a same sex union which has stalled liaison. Not wanting to lose good work done *Growing Together in Unity and Mission (2007)* was published by IARCCUM setting forth clear agreement of faith with grey boxes about further work needed eg *The Conception and Dormition of BVM* common statement with boxes detailing the RC dogmas. The Church of England's opening the episcopate to women put IARCCUM further on hold until a 2012 restart led by Bishop David and Archbishop Don.

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## Divisions are European based historically and the global south wants prophetic action.

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Archbishop Don Bolen sees IARCCUM born out of both the success of ARCIC and the failure of its documents to release their transformative power. Acting together in all matters except those in which deep differences of conviction compel us to act separately RCs and Anglicans continue to follow the Lund principle affirmed by the 1952 Faith and Order Conference of the World Council of Churches held at Lund, Sweden. Something new is being born though about the reception of ARCIC. Item 7 & 10 of *Growing Together* mention working together for unity is not appropriate. The 2012 mandate goes beyond documents into practicalities about letting the work of ARCIC transform our churches. IARCCUM is monitoring reception of ARCIC, looking at local and national reception and establishing dialogues where they do not already exist. Provinces and Episcopal Conferences are liaising and we are seeking champions/promoters. IARCCUM.org website was set up in 2014 on occasion of Archbishop Justin's visit to the Pope to make the content of ARCIC agreements accessible to scholars. It contains official responses, minutes etc and details of work on the ordination of women difficulty. In 2016 the Pope and Archbishop held a week's conference with Anglican-RC Bishop pairs committed to be pilgrim companions, handing on peace, mercy and justice. The bishops prayed Vespers together and received Lampedusa Crosses built from wood from refugee boats landing on Lampedusa island with joint commitment to listening together to the wounds of the world and rendering common service to those wounds. Archbishop Bolen commended 'Walking Together: Common Service to the World and Witness to the Gospel - An appeal from

the IARCCUM bishops to the bishops and the people of the Anglican and Catholic communities.' This celebrates real but incomplete communion, ecumenism at the foot of the cross to bind us as we respond to the pain of the world. IARCCUM has created IARCCUM companions after 1970s model of Sheppard & Worlock and invited the audience to become as such.

In the plenary there were many points made along the lines that the value of personal relationships never grows old especially when there are institutional divergences. The level of agreement we have in faith compels us forward. The Pope sending a pastoral staff linked to St Gregory the Great to Archbishop Welby who uses it in Canterbury Cathedral is significant. Covenants eg that of the Australia Council of Churches can be multilateral but with bilateral sub-sections to give impetus to Anglican-RC engagement. IARCCUM is a gift to the process of reception of ARCIC in both churches especially to the global south through the pairing of bishops. Divisions are European based historically and the global south wants prophetic action. I invited comment on how over the period served by IARCCUM an Anglican Ordinariate has emerged. Though this represents significant division over ordination it has some encouraging evidence of RC acceptance of Anglicanism. Both speakers saw the Ordinariate with its mixed reception being based on ARCIC and evidence of the surprising itinerary of the Spirit. IARCCUM bishop pairs are set to meet again in 2021.

### Conclusion

I apologise for the length of notes on a full six hours of engagement across the world sponsored by the Anglican Centre in Rome. In the spirit of IARCCUM I wanted to bring *New Directions* readers up to date on this important development, a refreshing of Anglican-RC partnership made possible by online engagement of substance in the Petertide seminars. Many are impatient with the failure of the Anglican Church to live true to the faith of the church through the ages. The work and resource website of IARCCUM provides ammunition to wage war against the parochialism in ecclesiology that now operates in our church even if we ourselves get labelled small minded by fellow Anglicans more ready to go with the enticing flow of the 21st century. Recovery of the Anglican-RC partnership has potential to hold Anglicans to account and bring the best gifts of Anglicanism to our sister church. **ND**

*Canon Dr John Twisleton ministers in the Diocese of Chichester*

**The English Chapel at Gordon Square is open from 12.15pm to 1.15pm on Tuesdays and Thursdays for the celebration of Mass at 12.30pm**

# Who, what, where, when, why and how?

Tony Hodgson wonders whether things will last

Unquestionably, the effects of the lockdown have been disruptive and damaging to the life of our churches. Despite this, most of us have never doubted either the durability of the Church of England or the resilience of our clergy eventually to emerge ready for the resumption of services. Sadly, the long-term prognosis for many actors and theatres, especially those located in the provinces, is not so optimistic.

On June 8<sup>th</sup> an interview with James Graham was broadcast on the BBC programme *HARDtalk*, in which the acclaimed playwright discussed *How much do we care about protecting our culture?* Four days later BBC Radio 3, in its *Arts and Ideas* programme, held *The Future of the Theatre Debate* in which Bertie Carvel, the actor and executive producer of the Lockdown Theatre Festival, was a central speaker.

The separate experiences of hearing both Graham and Carvel got me thinking about 2017 when I witnessed these two prodigious talents collaborate in a production at the Duke of York's Theatre, St Martin's Lane. That play made such an impression that later it provided the basis for a sermon I preached for Evensong at Westminster Abbey on Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> August 2018, the twelfth Sunday after Trinity. The following article is taken from that sermon.

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Hope springs eternal from our three readings - Exodus, Psalms and, by no means least, *The Letter to the Hebrews*. In the next ten minutes I will explain why, for me, and for many others, Hebrews is one of the most innovative and influential books of the Bible. To do this we will use the tried and tested six questions of journalism. Let us just remind ourselves. In the 2017 James Graham play *Ink*, which recently had an acclaimed run in the West End, there is a superbly scripted conversation between the character of Rupert Murdoch, the Proprietor of *The Sun*, played by Bertie Carvel, and his prospective editor, Larry Lamb, played by Richard Coyle. Lamb explains the five 'w's' followed by the question how that constitutes a good story. **Who, what, where, when, why and how?** The Larry Lamb character said that the last question, how, is often inconclusive and is best substituted for 'what next?'

**Who?** Historians have a *dictum* that to understand a book we must first read a book about the author, but this is not possible here because we do not know who wrote the Letter to the Hebrews. For a long-time St Paul was believed to be the author. Even the *King James Bible*, the

*Authorized Version* of 1611, attributed Hebrews to St Paul. However, experts have long agreed that Paul is definitely not the author.

What we do know is that it was written by someone with an extensive expertise of Jewish scripture and customs; so much so, that only someone of Jewish heritage could have produced it. Even so, the author also had a comprehensive command of the Greek language, philosophy and religion. Therefore, it was written by a Jewish convert to Christianity who also had a complete understanding of the Greek language and was strongly influenced by the philosophy of Platonism. So much for who wrote the letter, but **to whom** was it written? Obviously, it is addressed to the Hebrews. Yet it is emphatically Christian in its content. This suggests that it was intended for people from a Jewish religious heritage who had taken to following Christ. Essentially, Jewish converts to Christianity. So, it was written by a Jewish follower of Christ to, and for the benefit of, other Jewish followers of Christ.

**What?** The letter is a superb synthesis of three competing yet complimentary world-views. Judaism, Christianity and Neo-Platonism. The author verifies the identity of Jesus as the Incarnate Son of God and therefore a being worthy of worship. Maybe, within a decade or two after the death and resurrection of Jesus His followers were praying to Him as though He were God.

Today we take it for granted that, as Trinitarian Christians, we pray to God, through the person of Jesus, inspired to do so by the motivation and guidance of the Holy Spirit. Yet we have the gift of hindsight, two millennia of religious retrospection on what Christ means for humanity. In contrast, when the *Letter to the Hebrews* was written the Christian religion was still in its infancy, a fledgling movement, still existing within the nest of its mother faith, Judaism.

Until AD 70 the spiritual power-house of Judaism was the Temple in Jerusalem. It had a defined and historic sacrificial system and a priestly hierarchy. The High Priest, always a Sadducee, was regarded as a mediator between God and the people. One of the things we do know (from the Gospels) about the Sadducees is that (unlike the Pharisees) they did not believe in the Resurrection of the dead. This was clearly a problem for the followers of Jesus.

Now to us, the contemporary disciples of Jesus Christ, a religion based on sacrificing animals and birds might seem primitive, cruel and bloodthirsty. The fact that we

may think so owes much to the argument pioneered in the *Letter to the Hebrews*. It made a massive evolutionary step forward in religious thinking and practise. It did this by emphasising that the Good Friday self-sacrifice of Jesus both rendered redundant and replaced the existing sacrificial system. As such *Hebrews* is a foundation document for Christianity because it placed the worshipping practises of the embryonic Christian Church on a radical new footing.

Of course, reading backwards in this way sounds critical of the Jewish faith into which God chose to be incarnate. Better to make comparisons with what went before or even alternative contemporary belief systems. For example, we must not lose sight of the fact that when Jesus was born, lived and died, Judaism was arguably the world's most sophisticated faith. It was monotheistic, believing in just one God. This was superior to the *pantheon* of gods worshipped by the Greeks and Romans. Judaism was underpinned by an advanced ethical and legal structure. Admittedly, there were animal sacrifices, but this was at a time when other religions were sacrificing people and even their own children.

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### The purpose of the *Letter* was to rally the faithful and strengthen the faint hearted. To reinforce the resolve of Jewish followers of Jesus to remain loyal to Him.

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In order both to utilize and reform the sacrificial tradition, our unnamed writer had first to corroborate the priestly credentials of Jesus. Today, Christians obediently accept that Jesus was simultaneously prophet priest and king. The fact that we do so owes much to the author of *Hebrews*. As Christianity emerged from Judaism the concept of Jesus possessing a priestly identity was problematic for Jews. This was because Jesus was descended from the tribe of Judah and the Hebrews had a priestly cast descended exclusively from the line of Levi. To overcome this seemingly insurmountable obstacle, our mysterious author boldly and brilliantly used the obscure Old Testament figure of Melchizadek to establish the High Priestly credentials of Jesus.

The High Priest, Melchizadeck, King of Salem, is mentioned in the book of Genesis as blessing Abraham. Significantly, this reference of priesthood appears to pre-date the Levitic priesthood established in the book of Exodus. Notably, Melchizadeck, like Jesus was both priest and King. And because he was responsible for blessing Abraham, the Father of the nation of Israel, his seniority and precedence exceeded that of the Levitic priesthood. This was a tactic as astonishing as it was audacious. And it worked. Evidently the author of the *He-*

*brews* subscribed to the belief that “if you’re going to drop names, then make sure they are names that bounce!”

Moving on to the third of our three w’s, **Where?** Since the letter is addressed to the Hebrews it is self-evident it was intended for a community of Jewish people. who had taken to following Jesus. Perhaps in Jerusalem, maybe Rome. Certainly, a city (within the Roman Empire) that had a substantial Jewish-Christian community who would also have been familiar with the Greek language and philosophy employed in the *Letter*.

**When?** The date AD 70 is known to all students of the New Testament. This was when the Romans destroyed the Jerusalem Temple and the Jewish disintegration occurred. Because the Jerusalem Temple is the background against which the *Letter to the Hebrews* is set, we know that it was written before AD 70. Moreover, the very particular argument warning against apostasy suggests that it was written sometime after AD 50. It was around this time that Jewish followers of Jesus found it increasingly difficult to remain part of synagogue society. So, we can place it as being written sometime during the twenty years between AD 50 and AD 70. This leads us onto the last of our w’s. **Why** was it written?

The purpose of the *Letter* was to rally the faithful and strengthen the faint hearted. To reinforce the resolve of Jewish followers of Jesus to remain loyal to Him. Seemingly, pressure was being applied to them to abandon their allegiance to Christ. Our nameless writer urged them not to do this. Better never to have had the faith at all than to have had the faith and lost it. The message is “yes” you may now be experiencing criticism and discrimination, but never forget that Jesus suffered and sacrificed his life for you. Identify with Jesus. Draw strength from his example and inspiration from his Resurrection victory. Also, remember that Jesus is the ultimate Divine High Priest seated in the heavenly reality. By approaching Him in prayer and worship, He will mediate for us.

*The Letter to the Hebrews* was written at a pivotal moment during the birthing of the Christian faith. The followers of Jesus faced a drastic decision. Remain within the safe and familiar nest of the mother religion or risk the terrifying yet exhilarating challenge of independent flight. Jesus had to make a choice. The people for whom the *Letter to the Hebrews* was written had to make a choice. We too have to make a choice. That choice is different for each of us. For some it could be simply about listening to this radical and wonderful voice calling to us across two millennia. For others it is about engaging more fully with the existing relationship. We do so in the knowledge that the one who calls is faithful. **ND**

Fr Tony Hodgson is Vicar of  
St Margaret of Antioch, St Anne’s on the Sea.

# Giants in the Land

Nicolas Stebbing CR remembers great Zimbabwean Anglicans



What is the value of history? It can be very interesting, very entertaining, or it can be an exercise in nostalgia or fantasy. It can teach us to be wise or it can lead us down false paths. *New Directions* has often been a place where history is written about. Does it simply entertain? Does it mislead? or does it inspire? We Anglicans living in the Catholic tradition have some great history. How can it take us into the future?

The Anglican Church in Zimbabwe is not well known in our Communion but it had some great missionary figures. Most of them stayed for decades walking thousands of miles before there were roads, sleeping in grass huts, teaching, celebrating the Eucharist, and starting small bush schools which have often grown into famous schools today. There were people like Archdeacon Upcher, who literally walked the length and breadth of Zimbabwe; there was tough little Bishop Billy Gaul, who once offered to fight a drunken miner. There was the great Bishop Edward Paget who was bishop for over thirty years. There were great missionaries from my own Community of the Resurrection. They built schools and hospitals, churches and community centres. In 1890 there was not a single Anglican in Zimbabwe. In 1990 there were hundreds of thousands! That was the fruit of their work. They were wonderful people who loved God, loved the Church, loved the people of Zimbabwe and spent their lives laying the foundations of the wonderful Church we have there today.

But there is more to the story than that. We often forget that the real work was done by Zimbabweans themselves – the Shona and Ndebele people of Zimbabwe and, let it not be forgotten, a lot of English speaking lay people as well. The lay people were the converts who built the first churches. They were the people who interpreted the sermons which the missionary fathers preached. They were teachers who acted also as catechists. Often they had a lonely job as the only teacher in a small school, telling people about Christianity, waiting patiently for the seeds they sowed to grow up into faithful Chris-





found a family called Doma who with other Anglicans walked eight miles to church each Sunday. I suggested they built their own church. I visited their home a couple of times and we agreed to dedicate it to St Stephen. Then the Liberation War got more rough. I had to leave the district and heard nothing more. I assumed our plan for St Stephen's had disappeared into the war.

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**Often they had a lonely job as the only teacher in a small school, telling people about Christianity, waiting patiently for the seeds they sowed to grow up into faithful Christians.**

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Thirty years later I had an email from one of Mrs Doma's sons. "Father, we have now completed St Stephen's Church. Would you like to come and say mass here?" I did and found Mrs Doma was the hero of the day. Throughout the years of war and the years of peace that followed she had given ten per cent of her crops towards buying bricks and cement for the church. She persuaded her friends to do the same. Slowly the walls grew. Then one of her sons became a priest and was able to get a church in England to pay for the roof. When, finally, the church was finished Mrs Doma was dying in hospital. Her sons went and said "Mother, we've finished the church." She said "Good. Now I can die." And she died a few days later. Her first time in the completed church was at her funeral!

I am sure many readers of New Directions can tell similar stories. These are the people who really matter in our church. Whether we talk about mission, growth, finances or deepening spiritual life these are the people who can make it happen. Where are they? **ND**

*Fr Nicolas Stebbing is a member of the Community of the Resurrection, Mirfield.*

tians. Some got ordained. Some became nuns. Thousands joined the Mothers Union which has always been one of the most important parts of Anglican Christianity.

Who were these people? Berard Mizeki came from Mozambique to Cape Town as a teenager, was converted by the Cowley Fathers, and went to Mashonaland as a catechist. After five years he was martyred, refusing to leave his station because there were old people to care for. His shrine draws thousands of Anglicans in mid winter every year. There was Canon Sagonda who cycled all round Matabeleland, refusing to use a car; Fr Chipunza who said mass in bare feet because he was on holy ground. And there was Helen Mangwende who did great work for her fellow women. She was the wife of the chief whose uncle had had Bernard Mizeki killed!

These are the real heroes of Anglicans in Zimbabwe. One day soon their stories need to be written down and told. Here is a story I would like readers of New Directions to know and be inspired by.

Back in 1976 I was a young mission priest on a motor cycle serving an area with eight churches. At my best outstation I



# The Sacrament of the present moment

Denis Desert on the theology of Jean Pierre de Cassaude



**T**he French priest Jean Pierre de Cassaude [1675-1751] is known for the dictum that each moment of our lives is a sacrament. Yes, in the hurly burly and the ups and downs of life or with the sheer hum-drum of the everyday each moment has a sacramental nature. That needs some thinking about. Every moment of every day is a sacrament and becomes a moment of grace.

I turn to a very everyday event from my own life sometime in the nineteen seventies. Dressed in my cassock for pastoral visiting, I took a short cut through some allotments. As I walked along one of the narrow dividing strips, I came across a man busy sowing seed. His back was turned from me so he had no idea it was the vicar. As I came alongside he swung a handful of black onion seeds under my nose and said in very hushed and almost reverent tones, "It's a marvel, a marvel, you puts these little fellas in and ups they comes, it's a *marvel!*" And so saying he went on sowing the seed. For that man, unknown to himself, sowing seed was in fact a sacrament of the present moment in which he was opened to the very mystery of life.

It has seemed to me for some years that the world and our environment is not only a sacrament but also a parable. The word, 'parable,' comes to us directly from the Greek meaning something thrown alongside us, not at us. Life is for us to pick up, think about it and react appropriately. In this sense a parable is down to earth and everyday and certainly not as used to be taught, 'An earthly story with a heavenly meaning.' I would suggest that for those who have eyes to see and minds to perceive our environment speaks, it has something to tell us. This

understanding was brought home to that ancient Greek philosopher Sophocles when he wrote circa 496BC, "*Wonders are many, and none is more wonderful than man.*" So we human beings are surrounded by wonder and we humans are at the very pinnacle!

In this 'post modern' age of ours where old values seem to have disintegrated and traditions have faded away, we need to underline the element of wonder that surrounds us. Yes, there is the wonder of high mass with its ceremonial, with bells tinkling, clouds of incense and the moment of the elevation of the Blessed Sacrament, but as Cassaude might have suggested, the wonder of the mass needs to be reflected in the daily life of the faithful. So how might this be expressed? I suggest that the faithful need to be encouraged to open their eyes and minds to see the wonder that surrounds them. To look into the garden where a blackbird feeding its young; up there in that magnificent copper beech tree a squirrel enjoys a nut; the next door neighbour waves and you enjoy a chat; indoors you switch on the TV. and view a feature of an Ethiopian group celebrating; then the children come home from school full of vim and vigour. So we could go on. We are all surrounded with the sacrament of wonder embracing us with grace.

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**It has seemed to me for some years that the world and our environment is not only a sacrament but also a parable.**

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As traditionalists we are in a unique position to assist the faithful to take the faith from the sanctuary into their daily lives. The heart of our Blessed Lord's teaching lay in how the hearers lived their daily lives. Reflect on the parable of the Prodigal Son in Rembrandt's perceptive painting. Without a doubt our faith and the gospel is rooted in our everyday lives. This, I consider, is the message that needs to be conveyed in the Church today. **ND**



**The Filipino congregation from St Michael's Ladbrooke Grove on pilgrimage to Walsingham.**

# In places where they sing

Peter Dutton rejoices at the return of music to our churches

On 6<sup>th</sup> September, choral singing (in the form of a professional quartet) returned to S. Silas, Kentish Town. S. Silas was built in 1912, and since that time has had various periods without a choir. However, for the church nationally, this recent lacuna in liturgical music has not been experienced since the Commonwealth. Then, the destruction of organs and the non-training of boys for well over a decade meant that the tradition had quite literally to be re-built from the ground up. In 2020 it was a bit more straightforward: I merely checked that the singers hadn't been evicted from London and that, after a period of enforced idleness, they were still willing to get out of bed at a relatively early hour on a Sunday. Fortunately, they hadn't been, and they were!

In the weeks leading up to the Lockdown, even the less liturgically minded of the singers would have noticed changes. Stoups were emptied, the Peace no longer exchanged, and communion was only given in one kind. The sense of 'strangeness' was heightened for us by the fact that we were performing from the ground floor, whilst the old organ in the gallery was removed, and the new one installed (a Hauptwerk system



(and occasionally derogatory remarks) of the general public. Rationing myself to two small glasses of wine at the lunch, so that Vespers wouldn't go with *too* much of a swing. Spending most of the Magnificat at First Vespers of S. Silas wondering exactly which altar was currently being censed, and how much improvisation would be needed before the Gloria. As it was, I struggled through my remote teaching (which did eventually get easier) and watched liturgical videos on Youtube (from the Old Normal, rather than the New) until late into the night.

When the choir eventually returned, I was then struck by all the things that I hadn't realised I'd missed. The feeling of being ever so slightly under-rehearsed, and then the exultation of relief when it goes off all right and the Vicar pronounces himself satisfied. Listening to the banter between my tenor who loves musical theatre and my bass who really doesn't. Heading off to the pub after Mass and discovering that, pandemic or not, the one drinkable beer will be 'off'. Above all, I had missed making music with others, and feeling like a small but nonetheless important cog in a great big wheel. I discovered in my 20s that I had no priestly calling, but here, in liturgical music, I do feel I have found some form of vocation.

I spent about six months wondering what music to do when choral singing was once again permitted. I had all sorts of grand ideas: the Messe Solenne by Louis Vierne, perhaps; maybe a rather complex piece of polyphony by Tallis or Palestrina. After attempting to harmonise a fairly simple bit of chant and discovering how rusty I was, I decided to play it safe. We sang Gounod's Messe Breve, and Panis Angelicus by César Franck. As we entered the last page of the Franck, and the music moved to a climax before ebbing to its close, I realised I'd made the right choice (and the fact that it was exactly the right length for the Offertory was the icing on the cake). Afterwards, I was humbled and deeply moved by how many members of the congregation came up and thanked us. Professional musicians can be inveterate moaners and the line 'Nobody ever says thank you' is uttered quite a bit, but at S. Silas we are thanked a great deal, even when we haven't exerted ourselves very much. There will always be less good days (as with any job), and moments when I pine after the Law Conversion Course that I once contemplated, but for now I remember Newman's words: 'And with the dawn those angel faces smile/Which I have loved long since, and lost awhile.' It's great to be back! **ND**

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based around samples from Saint Etienne in Caen, and with definitely the most French console in London). 'Hopefully we'll be back for Easter,' I wrote to the choir, with the naivety of someone who thought World War 1 would be finished by Christmas. 'Easter' rapidly became 'The May Devotion' and then the S. Silas Weekend (in July). At that point I moved through the bargaining phase into glum acceptance, and sent no further emails.

There were many things I missed. The wonderfully expressive music of Lent and Holy Week. The way that the normally exuberantly florid church interior looks utterly stark on Good Friday. The moment that the organ strikes up on Holy Saturday before the Gloria, and darkness turns to light. That would have been the first time our new organ was heard. As the morning of what would have been the May Devotion dawned in glorious sunlight (as opposed to last year, when it rained), I imagined cramming strings and brass into the gallery, and then heading off down Chalk Farm Road braving the blank stares

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# Epiclesis: Eucharistic Invocation of the Holy Spirit

John Gayford explains a central tenet of our faith

When the priest in the Western Church says the words of Eucharistic invocation to the Holy Spirit, he holds his hands outstretched with palms downwards over the offering of bread and wine is one of the most sacred part of the liturgy. This action has been a complicated and controversial subject which came to divide west from east, and other churches from each other, in word and in action. The origin is usually attributed to Jewish table prayers where blessings were given, such as *Birak hamazon* which came at the end of a meal, praising and thanking God. It has been pointed out that these Jewish prayers were not fixed until the middle of the second century when Christian Eucharistic prayers were still in the cradle. Irenaeus of Lyons has been credited with the introduction of the Greek term *epiklesis* which he did in his writings on heresies (*Adversus Haereses*) in about 180 AD. In this he made an analogy between the sanctification of the Eucharist and the resurrection:-

*For as the bread, which is produced from the earth, when it receives the invocation (epiklesis) of God, is no longer common bread, but the Eucharist, consisting of two realities, earthly and heavenly, so also our bodies, receiving the Eucharist, are no longer corruptible, having the hope for the resurrection to eternity.*

The epiclesis is then a request to God the Father to send the Holy Spirit or the *Logos* (the creative force) not only to change bread and wine (the offerings or oblation) into the body and blood of Christ, but also to bring about unity of his faithful with God, to give them strength, to worship him and to give them eternal life. We note that the Epiclesis is a subdivision of the whole Eucharistic Prayer.

St John Damascene (c. 675-749) in his *Exposition of the Orthodox Faith* says:-

*“You ask how the bread becomes the Body of Christ, and the wine the Blood of Christ. I shall tell you: the Holy Spirit comes upon them and accomplishes what surpasses every word and thought. Let it be enough for you to understand that it is by the Holy Spirit, just as it was of the Holy Virgin and by the Holy Spirit that the Lord, through and in himself, took flesh.”*

We note that the Epiclesis is a subdivision, one moment in the consecration. There is resistance to splitting up the whole of the liturgical action of the Eucharistic Prayer (as it is called in the Western Church) or of the Anaphora (as the Orthodox call it). This is emphasised when we consider the little known about the complex origin of its structure. There are claims that there is no precise epiclesis in words in the old Roman Rite.

Claims can be made that the origin of the Roman Rite disappears in the ancient mists of Christian history even before the doctrine of the Holy Spirit had been defined by the first Council of Nicaea in 325. This would account for there being no definite Epiclesis. Nevertheless the liturgical action of multiple crossings make it a liturgy of epiclesis. The offertory prayers of the Roman Rite developed over many years and were said in a low voice by the celebrant. We even have hints of epiclesis in the old offertory prayers. The first of these prayers *Veni, sanctificator* (Come O sanctifier) is asking for God's blessing. As the priest says this he makes the sign of the cross over the oblation. The gesture of the priest makes it clear that this is an offering being made to God and calling on the assistance of the Holy Spirit. The rubric says he stands erect, extends his hands, raises them and joins them, and lifts up his eyes to heaven and lowers them before he says this prayer. The goal of these petitions is for preparatory steps in consecration so that the bread and wine is changed into the body and blood of Christ. This is something only God can bring about. God acts by means of visible sacramental signs. Mankind can do nothing but beg. God's name is invoked and God's power is elicited. Jungmann claims that this happens at the words *Quam oblationum* (bless and approve our offering.....) and *Supplicis* (we pray you that your angel.....)

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**So the Catholic Church developed the belief that the words of institution (the Dominical Words as said by our Lord at the Last Supper) form the precise moment when the bread and wine become the body and blood of Christ.**

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So the Catholic Church developed the belief that the words of institution (the Dominical Words as said by our Lord at the Last Supper) form the precise moment when the bread and wine become the body and blood of Christ. This became a “genuflection moment”, when the priest holds up the Host and then the Chalice, genuflects, bells are rung and incense can be used at the elevations. In the Orthodox liturgy the Epiclesis is not a sacred moment: rather the whole anaphora is sacred, during all of which the faithful bow low and there is the descent of the Holy Spirit, as a diffusion throughout the prayer.

This difference of belief was not discussed in the 9<sup>th</sup> -11<sup>th</sup> centuries but was debated at the Council of Florence in 1439. The Council asked the Byzantines only for an official verbal declaration on the point without discussion. The projected decree said that the consecration was effected solely by the words of Christ. Pope Eugene IV eliminated this statement from the

text. He wished to recognize the liturgical usages of the two Churches while affirming Catholic doctrine. Later it was stated the intent of liturgies and, in general, of consecratory prayers, is not to focus our attention on precise moments, but to have us attend to the action in its entirety and to its complete effect. Despite this the development of many churches, each with variations of rite over centuries, has given rise not only to differing words, actions and interpretations, but also to concepts of 'double epiclesis' with invocations to the Holy Spirit both before and after words of institution within the Eucharistic Prayer, as in the Roman rite passed on to Gallican and Sarum rites.

Thomas Cranmer (1489-1556) introduced the Epiclesis into the Book of Common Prayer before the words of institution in the Eucharistic Prayer in 1549, derived from the Sarum Missal:-

*With Thy Holy Spirit and Word vouchsafe to bless and sanctify these Thy gifts and creatures of Bread and Wine that they may be unto us the body and blood of thy dearly beloved Son Jesus Christ*

Cranmer did not mean that there was a *transformation* but only that the bread and wine would *represent* the body and blood which then could be received spiritually. Even so what was said was too much for a Reformed Church. So it was removed from the 1552 version and was not reintroduced into the 1662 version. In spite of its strong Calvinistic leanings the words used in the 1549 were retained in the Scottish Prayer book of 1637. With the coming of Catholic revival in the Oxford Movement changes were afoot to alter the wording of the Book of Common Prayer. Anglo-Catholics of the late 19<sup>th</sup> century and early 20<sup>th</sup> century using the English Missal were faced either with using the Book of Common Prayer words of the Eucharist Prayer or the English or Latin Roman Missal. Neither really has an obvious epiclesis but this did not prevent the priest performing rituals of the epiclesis with extension of hands over the oblations and signs of the cross even while using Book of Common Prayer words.

To the Orthodox Church the Epiclesis is an essential part of the Eucharistic Prayer and is solemnly recited by the presiding bishop or priest after the words of institution. It can all be seen as the defining moment when the gifts of bread and wine are sanctified and become the body and blood of the Lord.

The early Roman Canon does not contain a satisfactory Epiclesis but Modern Canons were introduced after the Second Vatican Council in Roman Canons II, III and IV and also in the Eucharistic Prayers for various needs and for special use with children. Anglo-Catholics have been more excited about the Epiclesis than the majority of Anglicans. Attempts to make changes to the Book of Common Prayer were resisted in the 1920's. The 1928 changes, printed and used, did not receive the consent of Parliament. In 1971 there was an agreed statement made on Eucharistic doctrine made by the Anglican-Roman Catholic International Commission asking that the bread and wine become the body and blood of Christ. This was seen as too extreme so the terms "be to us" or "be for us"

were used.

With the Alternative Services Books introduced in the 1980's there was an Epiclesis but the way it was interpreted varied and in some churches was even resisted completely.

In Common Worship (2000) there are eight Eucharistic Prayers in an attempt to cater for the wide divergence of opinions within the Anglican Church. In A, B and C there is an invocation of the Holy Spirit before the institutional narrative; and D, E, G and H follow the Orthodox Church pattern with an epiclesis after the institutional narrative. In F there is no epiclesis either before or after the institutional narrative.

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**In Orthodox liturgy The Chalice with its contents is carried ceremonially through the great doors into the sanctuary in the Great Entrance while the Hymn of the Cherubim is sung. It can be believed that angels enter in this procession.**

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In Orthodox liturgy The Chalice with its contents is carried ceremonially through the great doors into the sanctuary in the Great Entrance while the Hymn of the Cherubim is sung. It can be believed that angels enter in this procession. In the liturgical prayers of consecration the Epiclesis follows and is a climax of several great moments but is not the final act of transformation. This is only complete when the Zeon of the liturgy takes place. The Deacon pours hot water (the living water) into the chalice symbolic of the fervour of the Holy Spirit who descends to change bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ.

In modern Catholic liturgy a bell should sound at the point in the Eucharistic Prayer when the priest spreads his hands over the offering of bread and wine. This bell is not just to wake us from earthly slumbers and distractions but to concentrate the mind on the pending actions of the Holy Spirit. First to perform the divine miracle of changing bread and wine into the Body and Blood of Christ. Secondly to plead that the ever active and present Holy Spirit is prepared to transform the recipients of this sacrament to share the fruits of salvation.

**ND**

**Suggested Further Reading:-**

- Crockett, W.R. *Eucharist: Symbols of Transformation* Pueblo Publishing Company New York 1989
- Johnson, M.E. (Editor) *Issues in Eucharistic Praying East and West: Essays in Liturgical and Theological Analysis*. Liturgical Press Collegeville Minnesota 2010
- Jungmann, J.A. *The Mass of the Roman Rite* Translated by Brunner, F.A. and revised and abridged into one volume by Riepe, C.K. Burns & Oates London. 1959
- Mazza, E. *The Eucharistic Prayers of the Roman Rite*. Translated by O'Connell, M.J. Pueblo Publishing Company New York 1986.

*Fr John Gayford is a priest of the Society of the Holy Cross*

# No Time like the Present

George Spencer offers a look at these Covid-19 times in relation to de Caussade's 'Sacrament of the Present Moment'

'Strange' is the adjective used by many to describe the times we are living through. Strange times, not least, for priest and people – and fraught with difficulty. It is hard to see if people are following the preaching when most of their face is covered by a mask. It is hard to offer and receive pastoral care when again you cannot read the face and are standing a metre or two apart. It is difficult to know what visiting may be undertaken and how meetings may be sympathetically arranged when faced with the choppiness of 'Zoom'. There is the concern that two classes of the faithful may be developing – the online and the off-line.

All of this can make a for a dissatisfaction with the present, and a yearning to either get back to what was or move on to a stable 'new normal', with richer possibilities. Surely, we cannot relish where we are?

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**Written for a community of religious sisters in pre-Revolutionary France we might feel de Caussade addresses an inherently more religious milieu unscathed by secularism and the retreat of religion into the private sphere.**

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I value my frequent visits as a young priest to the Community of the Transfiguration at Roslin, outside Edinburgh, as one of the richest experiences of my life (1). This group of four people lived in garden sheds - well, Patty, being a woman, had to live in a flat in nearby Loanhead – where she let young people hang out and write graffiti on her walls - in the grounds of the former Miners' Institute, using the tin hut of the Institute as their common area. They lived a life of prayer, simplicity and poverty, giving away anything they had accrued at the end of each year and starting afresh with nothing. But what a rich life this was! They were rooted in the conviction that everything came from God and was returning to God. It was place where humanity was celebrated, undergirded by contemplative prayer, the round of daily worship and hospitality.

Everyone was welcome to share the simple life of Roslin, and come they did, whether hungry, foot-sore, distressed, weary or downright curious. If this sounds a bit earnest in a rather Presbyterian way, that could not be further from the truth. The deep silence and seriousness of the prayer was complemented by the warmth of genuine care and concern, the blossoming of goodwill as people relaxed, and hilarity as Fr Roland regaled us with funny stories. It was also a place of absurdity; the radio (used only for listening to the news) kept in the oven because it got stolen so many times, the negotiations at the gate necessary to be let into the Enclosure (even when you were expected), and learning that a meal for 9 had cost 49

pence to produce!

The inspiration for this Community could be seen from the 'icons' across which spiders crawled in the wooden chapel of two garden sheds knocked together – pictures of Charles de Foucauld, Jeanne Jugan, Rene Voillaume: all people concerned with 'littleness' and who inspired communities to live with the poor and destitute and serve Christ in them (2). A writer frequently quoted at Roslin was Jean-Pierre de Caussade and his teaching on the sacrament of the present moment; the here and now mattered and was sacred.

For many years that was my nodding acquaintance with de Caussade's work, experienced in the life of Roslin: that it was important to seek and serve God in the everyday. Yet a closer study of 'the Sacrament of the Present Moment' (3) reveals quite a few more useful insights for our strange times.

De Caussade stresses that the present is where we serve God, and his fundamental point is that the present is a place of deep and full encounter with God; we submit to the here and now as a way of participating in 'divine action.' He makes a distinction between lives being 'lived in God,' a conscious orientation, and lives 'in which God lives.' Whilst the first attitude is laudable, the second is the great reality to seek, since, 'when God lives in souls there is nothing of themselves left' (p 20). Scholarship, techniques of prayer, spiritual exercises, even Holy Scriptures in themselves may or may not be helpful in attaining this reality; our fundamental purpose is to forge our bond with God and let that lead us:- 'when we walk with God, his will directs us and must replace every other guidance' (p 31).

Co-operation with divine action involves an act of will to seek God, and a loving heart to want his kingdom for ourselves and others. Trying to know the will of God is never easy. We may make mistakes in how we respond, others may be think us pathetic, eccentric and lacking in much achievement, but the soul trying to act in simplicity and with purity of heart in seeking God will not go far wrong, argues de Caussade.

Written for a community of religious sisters in pre-Revolutionary France we might feel de Caussade addresses an inherently more religious milieu unscathed by secularism and the retreat of religion into the private sphere. And yet, what have we witnessed recently? An online search for meaning and solace in the time-honoured ways of religion which offers something beyond the realm of individual experience? A re-evaluation of our createdness in the surge of spring under bluer skies? A reaffirmation of the value of human bonds of affection and kinship as we endured physical isolation? Perhaps more people than we think were feeling their way to affirming:- 'let us make use of our frailty, hardships, these cares... these doubts and anxieties, and find our joy in God who, through them, gives himself wholly to us to be our only blessing' (p65).

For those of us who are signed-up Christians – certainly priests struggling with the uncomfortable present – but for all of us, really – de Caussaude stresses the value of simply doing what is charitable and right, and not wishing the present away. Negative experiences leads to dependence on God alone, and he encourages us with the example of the silkworm: ‘Exist little worm, in the dark confines of your narrow cocoon, until the warmth of grace hatches you out...Who could ever have guessed what nature makes of a silk worm unless they had seen it! Only give it leaves, nature does the rest. ...All that remains for you to do is passively to surrender yourselves, offering no resistance, without thought, aim, guidance or direction... never knowing what is to happen next. And after many transformations, perfected, your soul will receive wings to fly up to heaven,’ (p58).

Another analogy used is the tapestry – we proceed a stitch at a time working on the reverse which is seen only in its sense and glory when complete and when viewed from the front in its totality. All that we are called to is to proceed stitch by stitch in fulfilling our duty to the present moment. There is sort of simplicity in this which is universal: ‘Everything connected with surrender of self, devotion to duty or purity is attainable by every Christian’ (p72/3). All that matters is what the will of God ordains for each moment, and to seek to be attuned to that in purity of heart and divine abandonment.

Another of de Caussade’s insights addresses the criticism which has been levelled against faith leaders and their annoying silence during the pandemic. With his insistence on the indwelling of God in every soul and the diverse ways in which that must happen, de Caussade cautions against judging others: – ‘if God’s purposes prescribes vocal prayers, loving sentiments, insights into the mysteries for me, I must love and respect the silence and bareness which a life of faith inspires in others,’ (p63). Once again God’s purpose in each life and mo-

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ment is paramount.

In other words there is no one way in which God works and calls people to live out his truth. And as a rider to this de Caussade cautions against those who look saintly – all conscious effort (perhaps especially noticeable in those in the religious life) is ‘directly contrary to inspired action’ (p 69). Better to be a person with humility, who lives in the hope of God each moment: ‘when we look for sanctity, speculation drives it further from our grasp. What he ordains for us each moment is what is most holy, best and most divine for us’ (p59).

If all this seems a tad too certain and upbeat for our times, the last point I take from de Caussade concerns his affirmation of the ‘via negativa’ He refers to the dark night of faith where everything is uncertain: ‘God is the fount of faith, a dark abyss

## Notes

1. For insights into the Community of the Transfiguration, see Miller J (2014) *A Simple Life: Roland Walls and the Community of the Transfiguration*, Edinburgh, St Andrew Press
2. Charles de Foucauld – writer of the rule for the Little Brothers of Jesus, lived a life of prayer among the tuareg people of Saharan North Africa.

Jeanne Jugan – (unacknowledged for many years) founded the Little Sisters of the Poor, by initially taking destitute women into her house in nineteenth century France.

Rene Vouillaume – a disciple of de Foucauld, lived with others in the Sahara and founded the Little Brothers of Jesus and an order for women. Influential through his writings and contributions to the Second Vatican Council, Fr Vouillaume, who died at the age of 97 years in 2003, met Fr Roland on several occasions and was an inspiration for Roslin.

3. Jean-Pierre de Caussade (1675 -1751) left notes of his guidance to the Sisters of the Visitation in Nancy which were eventually published in 1860 as ‘Abandonment to Divine Providence,’ alternatively named ‘The Sacrament of the Present Moment’

There is considerable speculation about how faithful the published texts are to de Caussade’s original notes, and indeed the publishers of the French text I have been consulting for further elucidation, makes the claim that none of the work is de Caussade’s (Limovia, 2013)! They claim the work is that of the Sisters, who saw a publishing opportunity, and editors went to some lengths to correct its many unorthodoxies.

All quotations are from Kitty Muggeridge’s 1981 translation of a 1966 French text, drawn together by Fr Olphe-Galliard, SJ.:

de Caussade, Jean-Pierre, (1987) *The Sacrament of the Present Moment*, translated by Muggeridge K Glasgow William Collins & Co. Ltd.

4. RS Thomas quotes are from poems entitled respectively: “Kneeling”, “But the silence in the mind”, “Finality” and “Raptor”. Of the many anthologies of his works, RS Thomas (2013) *Etched by Silence, a pilgrimage through the poetry of RS Thomas* compiled by Jim Cotter, London, Canterbury Press, is recommended.

from whose depth faith flows' (p85). He agrees that the lived experience of God may be bareness and dissatisfaction, even a sense of futility. After advancing the fairly conventional argument that hanging on in the dark night builds virtue, he goes on to say with challenging modernity that God is experienced as absence as well as presence: 'the pure of heart feel holiness surrounds them, but when they reach out he vanishes (p117)'. This reminds me of poets such as RS Thomas (4) and his reassurance that 'the meaning in the waiting', or the truth of living within 'listening distance of the silence we call God'.

in it, undergirded by the self-gift of God. De Caussade helps us to see that in the totality of our situation the divine presence and purpose is made actual, and calls for a response in generous surrender from us. **ND**

*Fr George Spencer is Priest in Charge of St Saviour's, Ravensthorpe*

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**Faith is, in the end, faith and not feeling or experience: 'I cannot see I am being guided but I cannot prevent myself from believing that I am.'**

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Faith is, in the end, faith and not feeling or experience: 'I cannot see I am being guided but I cannot prevent myself from believing that I am' (p116). When we contemplate our ageing congregations and wonder about our futures, perhaps an honesty and confidence about faith as mystery, silence and not-knowingness will engage the attention and commitment of the modern world, and give us some sort of future. There is a plea for faith here, faith in a God we have 'made small'; and a call to affirm that there is truth in the sidelong glance, intuitive thinking, and spiritual journeying into silence and unknowing which can so easily be jostled out of lives by all those 'isms' - rationalism, consumerism and humanism, and yes - religionism.

I found myself constantly asking in those scary early days when the virus raged and contrasted with the serenity of spring and the deep rhythms of Holy week and Easter, 'what is God telling us in the pandemic?' Well, something of the importance of relationships, of the created order and our place

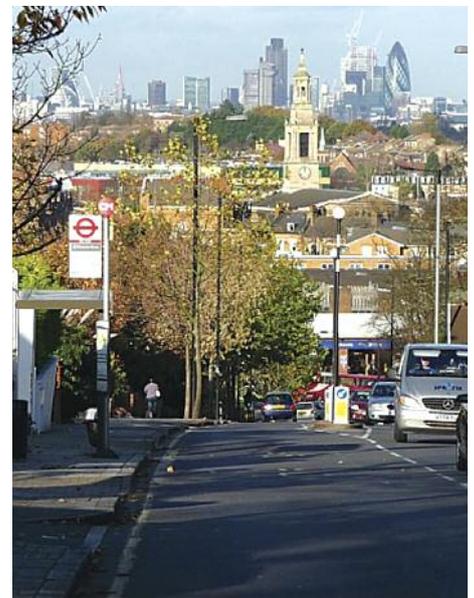
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## **Fr David Povall ordained at Southwark Cathedral**



It is six months now since I was at a performance, a bit less since I was at a church service (which it would now be possible for me to attend - though not yet my 8am Mass - with our new vicar at St Peter's, Streatham Fr Steffan Mathias trained at Mirfield proving quick off the mark). Nevertheless, not since I was a young Chichester chorister in the early 1950s have I done without theatre so completely. It was one very good reason I regretted my parents leaving the flat we rented in South-

which is crossed by various roads. But on its east side one can park easily in a side street, cross the busroute road, and enter a stretch of calm tall-growing woodland (which I had never done before) emerging quite quickly the other side on to a flat space covered in now appreciated and too rare acid grassland leading to a modest lake with a hill rising behind it and visiting geese and other birds, all well worth the short walk round the water. The hillside if you climb it which is no strain falls away towards Croydon



**And South London has been showing off its variety of countryside right here in the capital - of which I have frankly spent far too much of my life completely innocent.**

sea one street away from the King's Theatre and moving to Emsworth, that I had to stop going to Miss Mary Tonkin's ballet class which I had been doing since I was five - ballet being my first love, and the King's being the theatre I saw so much at an early age. Instead of travel by either of us, Meredith and I have been taking walks a lot. And South London has been showing off its variety of countryside right here in the capital - of which I have frankly spent far too much of my life completely innocent. Londoners of course know their famous parks - such as Battersea Park and Dulwich Park. The biggest of all is Richmond Park, a third the size of Windsor Great Park and like it in origin, meant for hunting. We also in the south have our commons, Clapham, Wandsworth, Tooting, Streatham, sometimes crowded with people not all walking their dogs, sometimes virtually empty - each of whose preservation had to be seriously and well fought for in the early 19th-century by William Cobbett when urbanisation everywhere was the threat. There are also many many smaller strips of land worth exploring, where nature has been left blessedly free of interference (parkification - which of course costs money in upkeep). A short drive from where we live is Mitcham Common part of which has become a golf course, and much of

covered with grazing grass and offers views of the surroundings. Nothing like as good as the views of Kent one gets descending from the Crystal Palace plateau, past Beaulieu Heights which is a small and engaging survival from the great north wood south of the Thames that offered good hunting in Tudor times. Hence, of course, Henry VIII's Nonsuch Palace (demolished by a mistress of Charles II to sell off as builders' merchandise and thereby pay her gambling debts). The greatest attack on our English oaks of course was by Henry

VIII himself - creating the Royal Navy in its earliest manifestation, leaving many tracts of land naked for farming. Walking distance from us and above Streatham Common are the Rookery (house demolished when its gardens were preserved as a park), and in Croydon borough a few yards further the White House with extensive grassland. The Rookery woods are further survival of the north wood, along with a short stretch at the top of Knight's Hill, south from West Norwood. Biggin Wood is off Beulah Hill a street beyond the White House grassland, and beside some profitable allotments - where a few years back some East European enthusiasts were said to have dug out a cellarage for themselves under one of their well-run vegetable gardens. Blessed times. **ND**

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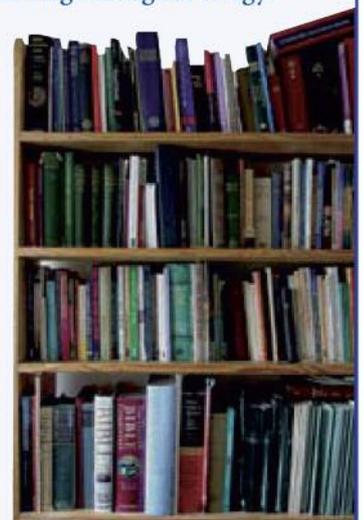
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# Editorial

In a recent blogpost on the 'All Things Lawful and Honest', Fr Barry Orford highlighted the need for more of a focus on theological education for our clergy (and indeed our laity): *'I am not proposing dumbing-down in ordination training. On the contrary, I wish to see future priests given the most rigorous instruction possible, but teaching directly applied to the vocation they are pursuing. This would include an introduction to the critical study of the scriptures and its application in preaching, as well as a thorough grounding in Christian doctrine, ancient and modern, and its role in homiletics. (It is seventy years since Dorothy L. Sayers asserted that one reason so many sermons are deadly dull is that preachers do not teach dogma. Without that, what do we have to say?) The principles of liturgy must be instilled into a generation of ordinands probably unaware of them, and too frequently unfamiliar with liturgy at all. Some guidance on the exciting challenges offered to theology by the sciences would not come amiss. Church history, especially Anglican history, must be moved to a central role. These basic elements would be accompanied by the studies in pastoralia and spirituality proper to priestly formation.'* Fr Orford has highlighted something that in recent months has become apparent in the life of our Church. Put simply many of our clergy do not understand or have knowledge of the history and practice of our church. It is for this reason we hear calls for the use of individual communion cups, the distribution of hosts in individual plastic bags to be held up by the congregation at the consecration, and the placing of loaves of bread in front of television screens during live streamed masses. Whilst all of these are well intentioned pastoral attempts to cope with the situation in which we all find ourselves they are simply not part of the worshipping life of the Church of England as traditionally, historically, or theologically understood. It is to be hoped that as we look to the future as a Church with much reduced means we are able to explore how better to educate those who lead our Church in precisely what it is to be part of the Church of England and to share in her corporate life. This is of course nothing new, the Oxford Movement grew out of a time when many church leaders had scant regard for the traditions of the church, let alone her pastoral life. The focus pastoral care, theology, and the worship of God emphasised by the Oxford Movement

transformed the Church of England and took hold of her corporate life. This has perhaps led to a certain complacency and a feeling that 'anything goes' if we can find a way of justifying it. As Catholics in the Church of England we need to look to the wider church for the stability and guidance as to how to rebuild the Catholic life of our Church.

As this magazine goes to press it looks like there will be another period of partial lockdown due to the Covid-19 pandemic. It is uncertain what the new measures will mean for our churches but it is clear they will have an impact on our communities. Whilst it may seem odd to include poetry in this editorial, the words of Minnie Louise Haskins, quoted most memorably by His Late Majesty King George VI, seem as appropriate for us today as ever they were:

*And I said to the man who stood at the gate of the year:*

*"Give me a light that I may tread safely into the unknown."*

*And he replied:*

*"Go out into the darkness and put your hand into the Hand of God.*

*That shall be to you better than light and safer than a known way."*

*So I went forth, and finding the Hand of God, trod gladly into the night.*

*And He led me towards the hills and the breaking of day in the lone East.*

*So heart be still:*

*What need our little life  
Our human life to know,  
If God hath comprehension?  
In all the dizzy strife  
Of things both high and low,  
God hideth His intention.*

*God knows. His will  
Is best. The stretch of years  
Which wind ahead, so dim  
To our imperfect vision,  
Are clear to God. Our fears  
Are premature; In Him,  
All time hath full provision.*

*Then rest: until  
God moves to lift the veil  
From our impatient eyes,  
When, as the sweeter features  
Of Life's stern face we hail,  
Fair beyond all surmise  
God's thought around His creatures  
Our mind shall fill. **ND***

# the way we live now

Christopher Smith is social-distancing on Venus

Just when I thought that 2020 had given all the hilarity it could possibly offer, I found my eye drawn to a headline declaring, 'Signs of alien life detected on Venus.' Ah, yes, of course. 'Microbes unlike any life on Earth could be thriving high in the clouds of Venus, according to a new discovery by astronomers.'

It did at least spark a jolly debate with my colleague about the likelihood of the existence of life on other planets, of whose existence Fr Eddie is, on theological grounds, unconvinced. The Sky News report wasn't entirely convinced

has been done. We might start with the Letter to the Hebrews, whose author begins by placing Jesus in the context not of men but of angels. He uses texts from the Psalms to show how Jesus is not an angel, but is in fact higher than the angels, and makes the point that redemption has been brought about not by an angel, but by Christ.

And so it is revealed to us that the consequence God endures as a result of creating even angels is that some of them rebel. The angels have free will, like us, and some of them rebel. There is war in heaven, and there is a fall in the cosmos.

It's worth keeping in mind, then, that Christianity is not a rule-book, a systematic answer for every question about how we might live, or a set of statements about the nature of ultimate reality. First and foremost, it is the announcement of what God has done and continues to do in Jesus Christ. At one special moment in time, God cut into the process of human history in an act of unique and decisive significance. We inevitably comprehend it back-to-front: we work out that God is Father, Son and Holy Spirit from what we know about Jesus and the consequences of the Incarnation; in fact, God the Holy Trinity takes the initiative in sending the Second Person of that Trinity to unite himself with human nature in the womb of a Virgin.

And so we come to understand that the course of history is not, as the pagan world believed and believes it to be, 'an endless series of cyclic processes, an infinite sequence of civilisations, cultures and individuals... without any ultimate purpose or any real meaning.' It is very tempting to embrace that idea of cycles: the Babylonians have come and gone, the Egyptians, the Chinese, the Greco/Roman world, and so on, and wasn't Western Christendom fabulous while it lasted, but, like any other civilisation, it's now in decline. Life is just one damned thing after another.

But if such a cycle were ever real, the Incarnation has exploded it, as God's answer to the Fall. We call it Redemption. And it is not a sticking-plaster fix of a problem unanticipated by God. It is the fulfilment of a promise that is built into creation itself. It is the event which opens up for us the invitation to be united with God through the human nature of Jesus Christ. And if there is such a thing as 'post-Christian' history, it is the as yet unfinished story of the incorporation of human beings as individuals into the manhood of Christ through the Body of Christ which is his Church. Venus will have to wait. **ND**

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**It's worth keeping in mind, then, that Christianity is not a rule-book, a systematic answer for every question about how we might live, or a set of statements about the nature of ultimate reality.**

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either, I felt, evidenced by the word 'could.' Here it is again: 'Scientists have discovered a rare molecule in the clouds of Venus, which suggests colonies of living microbes could be thriving in the oxygen-free environment high in the planet's atmosphere.'

I amused myself by wondering whether this new life-form was being required to refrain from mingling in groups of more than six at the moment, but I suppose that merely illustrates my current internal hysteria. Yet stories about life on other planets do throw up important questions about the human condition. I often think of the science-fiction trilogy by C.S. Lewis, with its voyages to Mars and Venus, imagining worlds beyond our own where there has been no fall, where there is no word for 'evil,' and where it would not enter anyone's mind to do something they knew to be against the will of God. It's a useful scenario to help us think about original sin: what if the fall had never happened? No Babel, perhaps, so that we would all understand each other. No predation? Certainly no war.

Some grown-up thinking about original sin might help to keep interplanetary matters in perspective, and plenty

And man, instead of resisting that cosmic fall, eats the fruit of the forbidden tree, and falls too. Now we know evil as well as good, and a god who didn't unconditionally love his creation might have left it stewing in its own juice. For the first time, the material part of the universe had contravened God's will for it. Eric Mascall said that the first sin was like a crack in a vase: 'Like a microscopic crack in a china vase, it initiated a process of disintegration and corruption whose consequences spread far beyond the area of their origin.' And the crack leads to a breaking of unity, of Adam's unity with God, of our unity with God and of our unity with each other. People not only turn their backs on God, but are unable to live at one with each other.

But something remarkable happens, and it can happen because even sin cannot destroy our relationship with our creator. 'Those who deny thee,' chant the chorus in T.S. Eliot's *Murder in the Cathedral*, 'could not deny, if thou didst not exist; and their denial is never complete, for if it were so, they would not exist.' 'God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life,' writes S John.

# views, reviews and previews

**art**



## YOUNG REMBRANDT

Ashmolean Museum,  
until 1st November, 2020

**This show** was originally due to close on the 7<sup>th</sup> June. Thanks to covid-19 it will now close at the beginning of November. It is an unusually demanding show, not the typical parade of great masterpieces, rather it is a collection of paintings, prints and drawings from Rembrandt's first ten years of production (1624-34). It shows the young artist steadily maturing and includes such masterworks as New York's 'Noble Slav' and the Rijksmuseum's 'Jeremiah lamenting the destruction of Jerusalem'. It also includes badly constructed, over-coloured, mixed-up, disproportioned pieces which prove how hard Rembrandt had to work to become 'Rembrandt'.

In a way this tour of the artist's studio over time is the nearest we can come to seeing Rembrandt at work. One actual visitor to his studio, Constantijn Huygens, Secretary to the stadtholder Frederick Henry, was influential in raising Rembrandt's profile at The Hague which in turn led Rembrandt to move to Amsterdam from his native Leiden in 1631. Huygens' notes of his visits to the studio (they are an appendix in the excellent catalogue) are not only some of the best contemporary criticism of the artist but also bring out important elements of his early work, notably his close artistic relationship with his fellow Leiden painter,

Jan Lievens. The show brings together a number of treatments of the same subject by the two artists. And in the earliest of these Lievens is the better painter.

'The anatomy lesson of Dr Nicholaes Tulp,' Rembrandt's breakthrough painting of 1632 is not in the show, but there are enough pictures of men in black with fantastic white ruffs, plus slightly wonky lateral perspective (a problem even for so fine a picture as the 1636 'Blinding of Samson') to compensate. These pictures of the rich and powerful are a sign of the popularity of the artist which led to considerable wealth. In this show we see Rembrandt on the financial up, with fine clothes, a large studio, careful and business-like use of materials. It is sobering to compare this with the Rembrandt of the late great self-portraits when his popularity had waned (the unflattering portrayal of city notables in 'The Night-watch' was the beginning of the end), his fortune had quite literally sunk, his wonderful collection of dressing-up clothes and props had been sold off and his business affairs put into the hands of his son Titus.

The appearance of the elements of what was to be that future for the man and for his work are what is most compelling about this show. The fancy dress and glittering props were not just part of Rembrandt's love of drama and self-drama. They also provide the surfaces for the light and dark chiaroscuro effects which he learnt from his teacher Jacob van Swanenburg, and the subject matter for the virtuoso use of paint to project images of jewels, metalwork and fabric. These features are hallmarks of the mature style and give breathtaking pleasure

in the Jeremiah and the Noble Slav (but look out also for the tissue of gold in Lievens' 'A Magus at his table').

The love of drama is there also in the subject matter of the exhibits, above all the biblical scenes of which Rembrandt was such a master and over which he spent such care. It is easy to forget that Rembrandt's parents were Catholic by birth and became Protestant, and that the Lieden of these years was ruled by persecuting anti-Reformed Calvinists. It is not clear in which Church Rembrandt's allegiance lay. That ambiguity shows in his work which was often not elevated enough for Catholics and too sordid for Protestants, though, as the exhibition notes, his love of excretory scenes was popular outside the unco' guid.

And it is the embrace of dirty, sagging, fleshy, aging humanity which is the great theme which emerges in this show. Whether it is a tormented Judas or the artist's aged father and mother, whether it is the female nudes which lack the rebecundity of Rubens' or the beggars to whom he gives his own face, there is no cruelty or malice in Rembrandt (compare his kind gaze to the coolness of Lucian Freud), but an acceptance of humanity as it is.

That humility or groundedness is shown above all in the self-portraits, a magnificent series of which he made throughout his whole career. The show begins with three of these, a hint that with Rembrandt it was a case of 'in my beginning is my end,' but what a beginning and what an end.

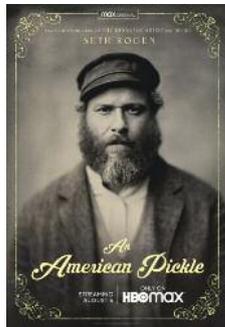
Owen Higgs





## AN AMERICAN PICKLE, BABYTEETH AND PINOCCHIO

**Christopher Nolan's** *Tenet* is one of the films attempting to draw audiences back to cinemas following their closure due to Covid-19. However, we have also seen the release of films including *An American Pickle* (Brandon Trost), *Babyteeth* (Shannon Murphy) and *Pinocchio* (Matteo Garrone).



These films are rather contrasting in style but are comparable in their attempts to represent the diversity (an ongoing concern for the film industry) of society. *An American Pickle* portrays Seth Rogen as Herschel Greenbaum, a working-class Jewish labourer in rural Poland who emigrates to Brooklyn with his wife to start a better life for their soon to be born baby. Unfortunately, Herschel then falls into a large container of brine at the pickle factory where he works as a pest controller. No one seems concerned for his whereabouts and he is preserved in brine for the best part of a century until being discovered by some teenagers in modern day New York. When he awakes, he is greeted at the hospital by his great-grandson Ben (also played by Rogen) who dismisses his Jewish heritage in favour of a secular lifestyle. Initially Herschel is astonished that Ben refuses to pray for his deceased family when visiting the grave of his great-grandmother (Herschel's wife) as this is incomprehensible coming from the religious society of his remote town in rural Poland. *Pickle* grapples with sometimes daring political satire against Jews which is made acceptable by the casting of Rogen who is himself of Jewish heritage. If this were not the case the satirical Jewish narrative would be highly controversial. Overall, the film incorporates diversity in a way that does not feel like "ticking boxes" but is inclusive and without offensive stereotyping. Herschel openly stares at an inter-racial couple as Ben informs him that in 21<sup>st</sup> Century Brooklyn this is perfectly normal. A fur-

ther example of the film's attempt to represent today's society is including an inter-racial gay couple who are shown articulating themselves with "camp" gestures as they enquire about Herschel's "artisan" pickles being both vegan and organic (unaware that they have been created from discarded cucumbers found in trashcans and glass jars found in the same waste). Whilst there is some irony and arguable stereotyping of young homosexual couples being vegan, this mostly comes across as humorously cliché. The diverse casting choices are highlighted by the characters' speech in a way that is natural, normalized and in a fashion that does not see diversity as something that is alien, as has been done so in the past.

*Pinocchio* tries to take the film back to its Italian roots in its new version by director Matteo Garrone of Italian mafia film *Gomorra* (2008). Although filmed in the Italian language, for seemingly commercial distribution purposes, the cinema I attended for this screening of *Pinocchio* presented the film with English dubbing as opposed to being subtitled, which unfortunately detracts from fully engaging with the narrative. The fantastical narrative that is associated to the original text *The Adventures of Pinocchio* (Carlo Collodi, 1883) (which according to Wikipedia is the most translated text outside of religious books) as well as the Disney picture, remains in this version. However, it is complicated whether the film is intended to be marketed at children or an adult audience of art cinephiles. The cast are predominantly Italian actors, re-establishing this as a Tuscan tale, but I am afraid that the English dubbing does seem to detract from its ability to be explicitly *Italian*. Perhaps I am over critical to refer to the moment where Geppetto paints Pinocchio in white 'flesh' colour but despite the fairy tale like feature that Pinocchio is a puppet who becomes a boy, he is nevertheless a puppet at this specific moment. Since he is not Geppetto's biological son there seems to be no reasoning for why Pinocchio needs to be

assigned to an ethnic group and I question why this race must be white when he has been wooden for near ¾ of the film prior to this point. Earlier in the film in a heartfelt moment, young Pinocchio roasts his legs in the fireplace. Of course, in being wooden, he becomes ignited and soon his legs become stumps. Although it is right that his character be naturally frustrated by this inconvenience to his mobility, due to the fixation that Pinocchio is to become a boy it is problematic to present Pinocchio's paranoia of being unable to walk. This is because following the fire incident Pinocchio has become physically disabled and therefore, we should be wary of how this scene implies that his lack of mobility needs correcting.

Finally, the last film and the one I would recommend most out of the three is Murphy's *Babyteeth*. Showing elements of "rebellious" Saoirse Ronan's character in *Lady Bird* (2017) this film is about relationships and living life. Set in Australia Eliza Scanlen plays a school age only child who has been diagnosed with a terminal illness. The characters are varied and include both a pregnant woman (not often shown in film) and a homeless boy. Whilst Toby Wallace who plays the character of Moses (the homeless young adolescent drug addict) has not experienced homelessness himself, the casting of a relative newcomer as opposed to a Hollywood regular is particularly commendable for this role. I do not want to say too much about this film other than that it is beautifully executed on screen in both narrative and performance. Out of the three films that I have discussed, this is the one that best demonstrates what it means to cast well and portrays the most accurate representation of the people who live in society. Just several days ago the Oscars announced that only diverse films would be considered for best picture beginning in 2024. I hope that my short summaries of these recent cinema releases provide the reader with thoughts about the extent to which certain films are presenting diversity well, and not in a way that is simply "ticking a box."

Sophie Lyons



## A GUIDE TO CHRISTIAN ART

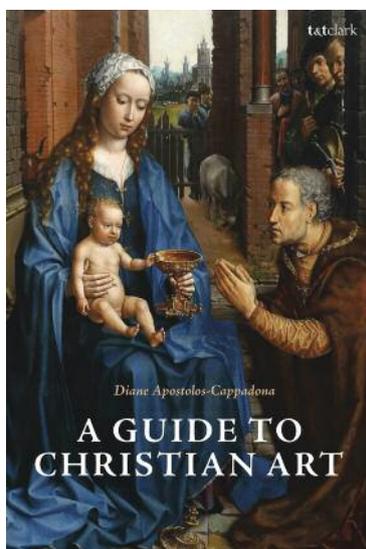
Diane Apostolos-Cappadona

T & T Clark, 284 pp

If you have ever been on a trip to an art gallery or a cathedral with a non-Christian friend or family member, you will recognise the sinking feeling that occurs when they turn to you and ask something like “Which saint is that?” or “Why has that rock got four streams coming out of it?” The subtext is: you’re a Christian, so you should know. At times like these, it would be helpful to have some reliable reference work to hand to save you the inevitable indignity of having to Google it on your phone. Unfortunately, such works tend to be unwieldy hardbacks with colour plates and thus not particularly convenient for a trip around the Tate.

Diane Apostolos-Cappadona’s *A Guide to Christian Art*, on the other hand, is a slim but dense volume which would fit easily into a bag or coat pocket for a day out. It is a scholarly yet accessible overview of the most popular (and some of the less frequently seen) symbols and motifs in Christian art of the medieval and early modern period, containing over 1,000 references. It also provides a handy summary of the lives of saints and the development of certain cults, drawing on various sources such as scripture, apocrypha, popular devotion and legend. It covers a diverse range of subjects including biblical and celestial figures, saints, animals, botanicals, colours and musical instruments. A significant proportion of the book, comprising the first main section, is dedicated to detailed explanation of the symbolism relating to Christ and the Blessed Virgin. One particularly interesting section provides an explanation of how certain pagan deities were assimilated into the iconographies of Christ, the Blessed Virgin and several Christian saints.

Inevitably, some of the entries cover pretty familiar ground, especially for Catholic Christians (you probably don’t need this book to tell you that the grey-



haired man holding a bunch of keys is likely to be St Peter). Nonetheless, you will likely discover some facet of a particular cult or devotion that you didn’t already know about as a result of the wide range of source material which reflects the breadth of medieval thought. The section on objects and animals is a good example; in addition to scriptural sources, it is based on a series of medieval bestiaries such as the twelfth-century English illuminated *Aberdeen Bestiary* and Aristotle’s *Historia Animalium*. It helps make sense of some of those slightly odd medieval depictions of saints or biblical figures with unexpected animals. For example, did you know that the panther was symbolic of Christ because it slept for three days after a full meal? Or that the goldfinch was a symbol of the Passion because it feeds on thorns and thistles? Or that the tortoise represents chastity and reticence, especially when depicted in the hands of the Blessed Virgin or the Christ Child?

Slightly disappointingly, there are only a few coloured illustrations, focusing primarily on Christ and the Blessed Virgin. I would have welcomed more coloured photographs showing examples of some of the most significant symbols and motifs. However, this would have necessitated a larger, more cumbersome volume.

*A Guide to Christian Art* is a helpful and enlightening reference work which is probably of most value to a reader who does not already have a solid grounding in Scripture and the teachings of the Church. There are ample cues for further investigation and research,

assisted by a helpful bibliography, together with a glossary and a timeline of church history.

Lois Day

## IN CONCERT SING

### A Mirfield Bedside Book

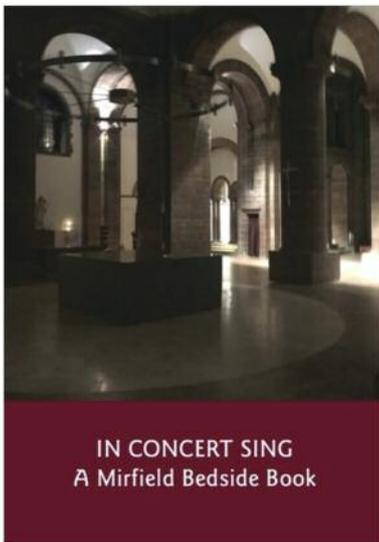
Bruce Carlin (Editor)

Mirfield Publications 2020 £8.50

ISBN 978-0-902834-51-4 166pp

Lockdown has brought many to the Community of the Resurrection at Mirfield through being able to access online their five daily services. ‘In Concert Sing’ reminds us how inaccessible services used to be even for retreatants at the Community of the Resurrection (CR). ‘A return trip from the top floor of the Retreat House to the Transfiguration Chapel was about 650 steps, 500 to the Upper Church, giving a daily total of some 4,000 steps.’ Editor Bruce Carlin assembles in this book articles and anecdotes about CR including Fr Guiver’s rationale for their re-ordered step-free Church, Fr Allan’s for plainchant, Fr Simmons on the Leeds Hostel and Bishop Sowerby on priestly formation at the CR associated College I trained at.

CR founder Bishop Charles Gore (1853-1932) is given considerable attention. The anthology includes the 1899 Daily Mail magazine article, which hangs in the CR cloister. The journalist was intrigued by Gore, his asceticism and how his preaching filled Westminster Abbey when he served as residential Canon. The sharing of his house with liturgist Walter Frere and bible scholar Richard Rackham launched CR in 1892. The article captures Gore’s clarity of thought in a punchline from the sermon there described: ‘There is only one reason for believing anything - that it is true; there is only one reason for disbelieving anything - that it is untrue.’ For Gore, though seen in his day as ‘liberal Catholic’, the Church is the ‘primary instructor’ about truth. ‘He regarded the historical clauses of the Apostles’ and Nicene creeds as safeguarded from error by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, and repudiated the claim of critics to interpret them symbolically rather than literally.’ CR to this day preserves daily recitation of the creed at Evensong de-



spite its removal in Common Worship, even if the genius of the Community is its wide umbrella over the Anglican variety of interpretation. Fr Grant recalls ‘when Harry Williams CR was [leading evensong] he stood to begin the Creed and said, ‘I believe in God.’ Firm full stop, and nothing more came from his lips!’

‘Mirfield Bedside Book’ supplements a recent book of CR obituaries and Alan Wilkinson’s authoritative Centenary History as a ‘gallimaufry’ of odds and ends about CR, trivial and profound including helpful basic facts about its members over 128 years. My own first connection with CR was hearing Bishop Trevor Huddleston preach in Pusey House. He alerted me to Africa and its needs, which he had so eloquently described in his prophetic book ‘Naught for your Comfort’. Fathers Harrison, Mercer and Stebbing paint a moving picture of CR’s historic and ongoing mission partnership with the Church in South Africa and Zimbabwe. The fruit of that mission which took in Fr Desmond Tutu as seminary assistant is evident. The anthology goes back to First World War service of CR brethren like Fr Northcott finding ‘he had not only to learn to use the bayonet, but also the ‘spirit of the bayonet’ - a fearsome, devilish thing, but the only way, I suppose, to make an effective combatant’ (Alan Wilkinson). On a lighter note my memories of MJK - Fr Martin Jarrett-Kerr - were kindled by Fr Grant’s recalling his ‘multi-tasking... sitting at the back during Chapter, darning his socks and writing a book review.’ CR remains a spiritual resource for many not least online in lockdown.

The confident Christianity of the community is expressed in awesome accessible worship and outreach respectful of other faiths as exemplified in the reflection of the superior on spiritual dialogue with eastern religions further to his visit to Bhutan. Fr Gartside contrasts Buddhist and Christian spirituality applauding the emphasis on practice in the former and finds there a call to renew expectation of transformation of life being the outcome of faith. Such transformation, as Fr Gribben’s testimony earlier in the book exemplifies, has been and remains the business of the well-named Community of the Resurrection. The editor, Fr Carlin, is to be congratulated in gathering these varied fragments into a light as well as a deep read.

*John Twisleton*

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## MORALITY – RESTORING THE COMMON GOOD IN DIVIDED TIMES

*Jonathan Sacks*

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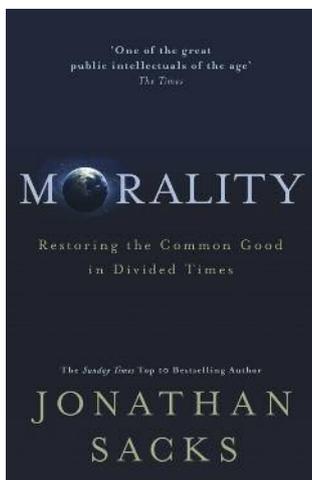
**Towards the end of *Morality – Restoring the Common Good in Divided Times***, Jonathan Sacks observes: ‘Morality matters. Decency, charity, compassion, integrity, faithfulness, courage, just being there for other people, matter to us... because we are human. These truths, undervalued for a generation, are the cultural climate change we now need. They are about to become vital again, and not a moment too soon.’ Written before the spectre of coronavirus loomed so large over the world and lockdown took hold of our daily lives, they are prophetic words. The other great convulsion of 2020, *Black Lives Matter*, has one premonitory mention, where he describes the movement’s co-founder as a ‘change-agent’. This new book is very much alive to what’s happening in our communities and societies today, seeking to take the temperature of any number of issues and problems with a consistent reminder of morality’s values and the difference they make.

Sacks holds solid Public Square credentials. Chief Rabbi from 1991 to 2013, he was created a life peer in 2009 and is one of the more reliably engaging contributors to *Thought for the Day*. In the autumn of 2018 he fronted a brilliant se-

ries for R4 called *Morality in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*. This transatlantic book is both more and less than that. Less, because it moves away from the format where small groups of school students shared undefended views on contemporary social issues in a forum chaired by Sacks, with him then going on to interview key thinkers and commentators on the theme, returning to the students at the end, and guiding the listener throughout with experience and informed narrative. It is more because it builds on his Templeton Prize acceptance speech in 2016 when he raised concerns over ‘the outsourcing of morality’ and his Vancouver TED Talk the following year on ‘The Future You’ in which he argued for the strengthening of ‘us’.

The *Morality* series clearly helped shape this book; much of its wisdom and discovery is presented on these pages. ‘I don’t think I have ever enjoyed programme-making so much,’ he avows, and it is certainly worth looking up as a podcast. But he also admits the work is something of a lifelong quest. ‘The journey of which this book is the culmination began more than fifty years ago.’ Dedicated to his grandchildren, it is deeply personal in places, reflective at times, and proves a fascinating mix of memoir, theology, sociology, philosophy, moral reasoning, and treatise. Yet again, it is none of those but all of them. His dialectic approach means that newspaper columnists such as David Brooks on the *New York Times* are given equal weighting with De Tocqueville and Descartes. This can be frustrating for minds which like an argument to evolve with gradual, clear building blocks along a more academic track. But his style and approach are even-handed and courteous so that real voices emerge, surprising details bring clarity to an idea, and the whole is a pleasing, sometimes puzzling, count-down of where we are, how we might have got there, and what it might say for the future.

Five sections – The Solitary Self, Consequences: The Market and the State, Can we still reason together?, The return of public shaming, Being human, and The Way Forward – consider individualism, family breakdown, suicide, drugs, business ethics, consumerism, public trust, democracy, post-truth,



identity politics, no-platforming, victimhood, vigilante justice, tribalism, and much more besides. Religion is presented as the regular origin and defender of morality, and that 'a world without shared meanings is one in which it is easy to feel lost ... The revolutionary shift from 'we' to 'I' means that everything that once consecrated the moral bonds binding us to one another – faith, creed, culture, custom and convention – no longer does so.' There is a lot to savour here, including a beautiful chapter on

marriage. Anyone who has appreciated Sacks's commentaries on the Hebrew Bible will enjoy his use of Scripture to make various points. Like other recent authors, he argues for the restoration of 'Sabbath economics' (a day off for rest and recreation, at least), and is careful not to compromise his small-c conservative free-market principles. He is good on the need to create wealth but also distribute it equally; 'markets need morals and morals are not made by markets.' But his theory that the cult of the individual began with Luther's nailing of the theses ('I can do no other') may not bear heavy scrutiny. Linking Protestantism with economics overlooks any discussion of the Industrial Revolution. Rights and responsibilities, with personal obligation, are considered more in the Enlightenment thought-mode and without reference to Augustine or Aquinas. Anti-Semitism is consistently cited although any mention of Girard's scapegoat theory is curiously absent.

Ultimately, the strands of Jonathan Sacks's life, career, intellectual training in

moral philosophy, theology, pastoral experience, and prominent public position, all come together to give a thoughtful, calm and impassioned plea for the morality-need we all have: the 'complex set of human ties that creates the environment of support, good feeling, resilience, trust that make up the matrix of a happy life.' And it is more besides. What is needed to safeguard this, and prevent the foundations from being eroded further? What effect have the three great revolutions of the past 50 years had (sexual of the 1960s, economic of the 1980s, and tech of the 1990s)? There is a further question to add: will global lockdown be seen in years to come as the greatest of accidental moral experiments? Whatever 2020 might mean for our collective sense of self-understanding and moral identity, we shall need patriarchal voices such as Sacks who bring balance, compassion and faith to the forefront of our human dilemmas. This book asks vital questions; the answers will be even more important.

*Simon Walsh*

One thing I learned from the excellent Prayer Book Society Conference talks (available online) was that the Church of England, or to be exact Parliament, did not order any national days of fasting and prayer after the epidemics of the 1850's. In later times during other emergencies, particularly the two world wars, there were national days of prayer sponsored by all the major churches, but fasting was forgotten.

Our fore-runners in the Faith would have struggled to understand this omission. Certainly the Apostolic church would, and Jesus is probably wondering what has happened in response to his command 'fast and pray'. In the ministry of Jesus we see a regular pattern of fasts, not least the forty-day fast in the wilderness. The Acts of the Apostles' mission was powered by openness to the Holy Spirit enabled by prayer and fasting.

There is still a widespread practice of fasting before Holy Communion. In my experience that has been chipped away to the point where people refrain from eating an hour before the time of reception, not even an hour before the Mass begins! One of the reasons for the long tradition of eight o'clock commun-

ion services in the Church of England was to enable a fasting communion.

I would guess the last time most readers were urged to fast and pray was last Lent. Fasting with prayer should be part of our rule of life. Wednesdays and Fridays are stipulated as Fast Days in the Book of Common Prayer in accordance with long established practice of the Catholic Church. Guidance to the Anglicans of the seventeenth century explained that fasting meant to limit eating to one simple meal a day. In any event fasting at that time was restricted to people between the ages of sixteen and sixty.

What is needed is some clear and authoritative teaching and guidance within the Society to encourage the practice of fasting with prayer. In my experience some approaches to fasting

are risible. I once asked an Archdeacon and a Bishop what their Lenten Fast was; one replied 'I've given up spirits!' (The alcoholic type) and the Bishop said "I am not having pudding at lunch.' It was a little cheeky of me to ask, as fasting should be a private and hidden discipline as Jesus taught (Matthew 6:16), nevertheless this fairly typical.

The purpose of fasting is to overcome our confusion of needs. We think we need so much: so much to eat or drink, ('I really needed that' we might say), so much sleep, so much recreation of different kinds. We cover up and confuse our fundamental need for God's love and mercy. Fussing about so many things that are necessary also distracts from the needs of those around us. Fasting opens up a hunger for the things that last forever.

Effective fasting directs our inner life away from the material and opens up a deeper consciousness of the spiritual. Fasting tests and trains the will to keep looking to God with a deeper experience of dependence. It opens up an experience of poverty, exposing our weaknesses and a reliance on God's grace. This grace is the source of all true prayer of any kind.

## Ghostly Counsel

### A time for fasting?

Andy Hawes

# October Diary

Thurifer considers private lives

“**V**ery flat, Norfolk.” Driving through the fenland of North Norfolk do not miss The Walpoles, villages between King’s Lynn and Peterborough. Especially see Walpole St Peter. For once a popular soubriquet is correct; the Cathedral of the Fens is what you will find. Satisfyingly symmetrical, long, wide, proportionate, its earliest feature, the tower built 1300. Once heavily populated, proximate to King’s Lynn port, built on profits from sheep. Now populated by the glitterati in second or third homes. There are two quirky features. “The Hudd” looks like a sentry box and was used as a shelter at the graveside for the priest to shelter during rain-swept funerals. Externally there is a passageway at the east of the church. It had been built to the edge of the boundary of the site and to facilitate processions around the church this “Bolt Hole” as it is known locally, was constructed. Its construction had implications for the interior and cause the interior’s most dramatic feature. As you enter through the south porch (ornate and impressive) there is a Jaccobeian screen that forms a narthex. Walk to the central opening, turn to the altar and exclaim in order for here is the result of the construction of the passageway. The altar is lifted on high. A series of steps leads the eye up and up. At its apex is the altar of sacrifice. One of the most heart-stopping interior views in any church I have seen. It takes the breath away. There are many other features, not least the wide windows of plain glass that means the interior is flooded by light. A tiny fragment of medieval glass remains but, if there is a case for a protestant iconoclasm (and there is not) this might be it. If there is a slight, tiny, minuscule flaw it is that the Victorian east window is a tad heavy-handed. Ignore and just wonder and adore.

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The regular reader (there is one) of these effusions may have spotted my penchant for the acidic review, not least by historians. A recent issue of the excellent publication *Literary Review* contained this by an historian about the biographies of two historians (Lewis Namier and J. H. Plumb) by historians: “Namier was a great historian ... [he was] beneath his charmless exterior a good man ... D. W. Hayton’s biography - scrupulous, humane and leavened with dry wit - does its subject justice. Plumb was, at least until the mid-1960s, a good historian and his work ought still to be read. But he was a distasteful person and one who squandered his gifts in trivial endeavours. He too has got the biographer he deserves.”

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The word “got” in that gobbet jars. I hate it in written prose and its American variant “gotten” (used by Prince Harry in his farewell discourse). I try to eliminate it in speaking; not always easy. Aware of sounding ponderous, if not worse, I doggedly say I boarded and alighted from public transport. Not that I have done much of that in recent times.

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Often infuriating though it is, predictive text occasionally provides disturbing insight into today’s world. I typed “domestic”, the first option was “violence”.

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Gotcha! seemed to be the underlying principle to many press questions at the daily Press Conference during the pandemic. They were less concerned with information and explanation than formulating questions designed to trap or undermine. Andrew Neil was much missed from the airwaves for his forensic, informed and searching technique. That other Andrew, Andrew Marr, was, however, much in evidence. I have never understood his pre-eminence nor stranglehold on po-

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## Andrew Neil was much missed from the airwaves for his forensic, informed and searching technique.

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litical and cultural commentary in BBC television and radio. His political and history documentaries have never risen above the superficial, bland and trite. In one encounter he pressed Michael Gove, who did not cover himself in glory by a ludicrous initial answer, to give an absolute guarantee that there was no risk to teachers or pupils when schools re-opened. Nothing is without risk. The issue should have been was the risk reduced to its practical minimum. Marr was more interested in scoring a point by having a minister answer “No”. There were too many instances from him and other journalists of that kind of questioning which was helpful to nobody, nor to the cause of accountability and truth.

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Nor have I ever understood how, why and when journalists arrogated to themselves the quasi-constitutional right to hold the government and others to account. Is it a fig-leaf for the prying, the door-stepping, telephone tapping, distortion, sensationalism, vilification that seems the basic fare of the trade? The job of journalists is to sell newspapers and make money for their wealthy employers. They are as entitled as anyone to scrutinise the actions of government but they cannot disguise muck-raking as objective scrutiny. Parliament, and specifically the House of Commons, is the proper constitutional mechanism for holding governments to account. Years ago the distinguished Fellow of All Souls’ and Conservative minister Quintin Hogg (Lord Hailsham), as absurd a figure as he was clever, argued that the House of Commons was an elective dictatorship. It was a concept he adumbrated during a Labour government but not one he mentioned when he was a member of a Conservative administration. It was that kind of intellectual cynicism and dishonesty that undermines the system far more than bed-hopping or craven opportunism. After a particularity nauseating and manic interview during the Profumo scandal in which he seemed completely to have lost control, the Labour MP Reginald Paget commented: “When self-indulgence has reduced a man to the shape of Lord Hailsham, sexual continence involves no more than a sense of the ridiculous.” See Bernard Levin, “The Pendulum Years” for more of the same. **ND**

# Questions Answered

Jack Allen answers your theological queries

*Our very first ever question comes from Tim in Rutland, who asks* **‘It says in Genesis that the Garden of Eden had plants that were good to eat, as well as look at. And the lion and lamb played together, as it was paradise, without violence. So if Adam and Eve were vegetarian, does avoiding meat help us get closer to God?’**

This is an interesting question. If we were vegetarian in the state of innocence and only eat meat in the current state of fallenness, then it seems reasonable to tie meat-eating to fallenness, and say that there’s something more sinful about being a meat eater compared to being vegetarian. And this idea has some basis in Scripture too, with Genesis 1:30 reporting that God proclaims that “And to every beast of the earth, and to every fowl of the air, and to every thing that creepeth upon the earth, wherein [there is] life, [I have given] every green herb for meat: and it was so.” My dad’s trusty old KJV even renders it as “every green herb for meat”, which is an excellent translation for our purposes; instead of meat, Adam and Eve had vegetables, so they must have been at least vegetarian in the Garden of Eden.

Whilst the idea of the lion and the lamb *playing* together in the Garden of Eden is more tradition than revelation, it does have some basis in Scripture in the passage given above: presumably, if God gives all living things plants for food, they don’t need to eat each other. As Tim says, ‘it was paradise, without violence’, and there’s little in the Animal Kingdom more violent than a lion ripping apart an antelope. Scripture, then, seems to give us fairly solid ground when we say that Adam and Eve were vegetarian.

The idea of the ‘lion and the lamb’ is an alliterative abbreviation of Isaiah 11:6, which we always hear around Christmas: “The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them.” Whilst Tim doesn’t cite this passage, it’s probably the easiest way of getting from Genesis to the Church: in Eden, all creatures were vegetarian, and in the coming future of the Messiah all creatures are vegetarian, so now we Christians ought to be vegetarian. Whilst, the lion and lamb in this passage are probably more metaphorical than literal, likely representing the conflicts and violence between different groups of people, Isaiah 65:25 claims that the lion will eat straw ‘like the ox’, so maybe there is something to it. The normal metaphorical understanding here is that there will be peace on Earth, and that peace is understood in terms of lions no longer ripping apart antelopes. Whilst, again, I do believe this passage is a metaphor, really being about people rather than animals, it makes sense that in the Kingdom of Peace, there isn’t even the violence of predation.

But there is an issue. If this is a moral obligation, then it seems reasonable that Jesus Himself would have kept it, at least as an example to the rest of us. Jesus, however, ate the Passover meal, which was traditionally of lamb or goat, mean-

ing that Jesus did eat meat. We have an explicit case of Him eating fish too, with Luke 24:43-43 being a prime example of this. Whilst Tim might be right to draw a line between vegetarianism and innocence, Christ acts in such a way to suggest that *some* meat eating is compatible with the Law of the Kingdom of Peace.

However, some scholars claim it is a Christian’s duty to avoid meat as a consequence of our other moral duties. Sarah Withrow King claims that “Aware of the suffering and pain experienced by animals raised and killed for food, with a knowledge of the immense waste of natural resources and subsequent impact on both our fellow humans and the rest of creation, and acknowledging that flesh is not a dietary necessity for the vast majority of Western humans, why would we continue to participate in a system that dishonours God’s creation and perpetuates violence on a truly phenomenal scale?” Again, this seems quite logical, particularly given the emphasis King gives to the environmental impact of meat eating: we know that the meat industry harms the environment, the people who live there, substantially, and a Christian is obligated to worry about the welfare of other people. Indeed, in light of the 2017 *Warning to Humanity*, it seems an act of some callousness to continue as before without change. The situations in which Christ eats meat are radically different to those we now find ourselves in; there was no risk of St. Peter fishing the Sea of Galilee to the extent that any animals risked going extinct. Likewise, King draws attention to the ‘violence’ of the meat industry, and takes it that this is contrary to the Kingdom of Peace that Christ came to establish.

As people seeking wisdom, we should be able to use our common sense to go beyond what is *explicitly* commanded to the *implicit* principles that lie behind them, and one of those principles is worry about those who may suffer. The relevant verse for principles here is Mark 12:40 - “Which devour widows’ houses, and for a pretence make long prayers: these shall receive greater damnation” - if our actions ‘devour’ - apt phrasing when talking about diet - the houses of the poor, then they are sinful. And a move away from sin can only ever be a move towards God. As Pope Francis puts it, “Concern for the environment thus needs to be joined to a sincere love for our fellow human beings and an unwavering commitment to resolving the problems of society.”

To answer Tim’s question, I think there is something to be said for the claim that trying to act in a manner that is consistent with and obedient to the *principles* of the Gospel can help us draw closer to God, because those principles teach us how to avoid sin and become conformed to Christ, even if we are considering the same action, because the context of those actions can be different in times and places 2,000 years apart.

But I think there is another way that forgoing meat can help us get closer to God.

It is well known that a number of religious orders are pescetarian, eating fish but not meat. Chapter 39 of St.

Benedict's *Regula* seriously limits meat eating by commanding that the Abbot should "Let everyone, except the sick who are very weak, abstain entirely from eating the meat of four-footed animals," citing Luke 21:34 ("And take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares") to note that modesty in eating is virtuous, lest one become so focused on the pleasures of this life that one forgets those of the next. According to Philip Lawrence, OSB, Abbot of Christ in the Desert, some Benedictine traditions have taken this further, and banned all meat and fish; the mostly vegetarian diet St. Benedict seems to want to enforce allows the brothers to become dietarily poor and to avoid gluttony, without diminishing their protein intake.

So, I think there are two ways forgoing meat can help us get closer to God. Firstly, by avoiding an industry that is incredibly harmful to the planet, we can express a love for God's creation and the people who live there, drawing us closer to God by nurturing a love for His work. Secondly, by giving up something we would rather enjoy, we can come closer to God in that act of fasting, turning away from the pleasures of this world to the joys of the next.



# The Society

under the patronage of Saint Wilfrid and Saint Hilda

**We pray for the strength and unity of our movement at a time when we are unable to gather together in large numbers**

Heavenly Father,  
 bless the bishops, clergy and people of The Society.  
 Bind us together in love and faith.  
 Renew us in service and witness.  
 And by your Holy Spirit  
 Guide our future and make plain your purposes.  
 We ask this through Christ our Lord.  
 Amen.

Saint Wilfrid, pray for us.  
 Saint Hilda, pray for us.

And I can't think of anything better for a Christian's spirit than turning to look up to Heaven. **ND**

*If you have a question about theology that you would like to be answered, email Jack at [jack.allen@kcl.ac.uk](mailto:jack.allen@kcl.ac.uk)*

## The Ordination to the Diaconate of Fr Matthew Austen



# “Began purple and black socks.”

Eleanor Relle on Mrs Scudamore and the Green Altar Cloth

**K**nitting, sewing and the care of textiles were the element – or one of the elements – in which Frances Scudamore lived and moved, and this diary entry of November 13<sup>th</sup> 1876, about three weeks after the burst of excitement surrounding the consecration of the new St Michael’s Church on the west side of Maidstone, in which she and her solicitor husband Frederick had invested so much time, energy and money, is characteristic. The purple and black socks were perhaps the “socks, worsted and silk” that she was to present to their son Freddie on Christmas Day.

“I to needlework,” she writes at intervals when her other areas of activity have gone quiet for a few hours; and the black and purple socks would have been a typical example of the way in which the work of her hands expressed and reinforced her family life. But her diary reveals that her interest in knitting and needlework – in which she evidently excelled – had additional spheres of operation, and incidentally connected her with the wider Tractarian network of her time.

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**One wonders whether, in addition to what keen needlewomen could produce in the available time, some articles from drawing-rooms were pressed into service and reclaimed afterwards.**

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“Haymaking – worked under tree,” she reports in June 1875. Of course she did. Haymaking was much more likely to be productive and well-behaved if she was sitting in the shade keeping an eye on things, without making it too obvious that that was what she was doing. While Frederick was at his office in the centre of Maidstone, it fell to Frances to oversee what went on on “the farm” – at this point about 15 acres of meadow, hop-garden and orchard, with livestock – and the careful account pages in her diaries (including “Beer for the haymakers, £1.2.6”) and the satisfaction with which she reports the arrival and sale of lambs, calves and piglets, make it clear that she was determined to get it right, although she, like her husband, came from a legal family, and her agricultural experience, before she and Frederick bought the Manor House property, would thus have been limited.

Her needlework took her further afield as well. Her 1876 diary begins with a scheme for school needlework, apparently intended to bring the school in her own parish into line with the teaching at the parish school of All Saints’, Maidstone, which she must have researched – All Saints’ being the dominant parish in the county town. She was herself regularly in and out of her own parish school (which was becoming the joint responsibility of the parish of St Peter’s and the new parish of St Michael’s), partly because its large schoolroom did duty as a parish hall and, for a while, as a temporary church, but also to offer encouragement and, no doubt, advice to the pupils – witness an entry on Thursday, November 16<sup>th</sup>, 1876:

“To 10 service....To knitting class at school from 2 till 4.30. Gave good conduct tickets. To 5 service with dearest Fred.”

That she, and often her husband and grown-up daughter Sissie, were so frequently present at daily worship at St Michael’s (a daily Eucharist lay decades in the future, but Holy Communion was always celebrated on Sunday and the Offices were said in church every morning and evening) made it almost inevitable that, once the new church was in action, items of its needlework in need of attention came the way of Frances, who lived almost directly opposite. Matters had, however, been moving in that direction well before the foundation stone was laid. In 1874 a Needlework Society (NWS to Frances) came into being, beginning with approaches to “divers needlework people,” and acquiring a committee and charging a small subscription as it became more organised. From the number of references to it in her diary it is clear that Frances was its mainstay, and she probably founded it. By December 1876 NWS was holding a meeting in the church with “76 women!” present. The terminology and the number – though the exclamation mark indicates that the number had grown – makes it clear that this was not a group of like-minded ladies with a penchant for embroidery (Frances would certainly have called them ladies if that had been the case), but a group of local women who met to sew with the encouragement and guidance of Frances and her committee members. The 1874 diary, especially as winter draws on, shows Frances regularly engaged in “cutting out,” which suggests that basic items of clothing like pinafores were probably on the agenda, and that the plan of the Needlework Society was to help mothers with limited means to sew for their families; but it was also probably a way of involving the “women” with their future church and perhaps enlisting their improved skills to help equip the church itself. The fact that by 1876, when the church was open, 76 of them were sewing together in the building itself, in December, says much for the inspiration that had been at work. Meanwhile, at home, Frances and Sissie had been making “red scarfs” to be given to the children of Sissie’s Sunday school class for Christmas.

Despite the endeavours of ladies and, no doubt, women, September 1876 had seen Frances sending out hasty “appeals for cushions etc for St Michael’s” in preparation for its consecration early in October. One wonders whether, in addition to what keen needlewomen could produce in the available time, some articles from drawing-rooms were pressed into service and reclaimed afterwards. The Manor House family had at his stage been thrown into disarray because a violent thunderstorm had dislodged a chimney pot over the principal bedroom – “much stone thrown down” – and when the repairs were put in hand, “a man named Smart fell from the scaffolding of the chimney pots down on the roof. Bruised only.” Frances went “to see poor Smart” a few days later. A visit from the church architect just after the lightning strike coincided with “No fire in either kitchen. Bathroom tap repairing.” But meanwhile, the altar linen – evidently not made by Frances –

appeared, and Frances was sewing fringe to it two days before the consecration. "Covers for lectern and altar table" had been in place since August, and there was already presumably at least one altar frontal, although Frances does not mention it. The first autumn in the new church brought heavy rain, and the clammy atmosphere of the new building took its toll - "Mr B*[i.e. Mr Buckmaster, the vicar]* brought the altar cloths here on acct of damp". Two days later, "Gilham mended the super-frontal," although the nature of the problem there is not clear. The church flag, flown proudly from the tower for the first time on July 7<sup>th</sup>, had also fallen prey to the weather by December: "Mr Buckmaster brought in the flag to be mended".

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### **Mrs Scudamore must have been not only an individual but a type, not prominent in history yet active all over the country, where parishes conceived or reconceived in the wake of the Oxford Movement had got off the ground.**

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After Christmas, and in good time for the Epiphany season, Frances reports on 28<sup>th</sup> December: "To 10 o'clock service. Green altar cloth arrived from Clewer. Mr Buckmaster unpacked it." This marked the beginning of a struggle that extended over several days: "Sewed the rings on new altar cloth with Mrs Hoar's help....Very wet day. To 10 service and to try to make the new altar cloth hang right. Over school registers till 4....To church and sewing rings to altar cloth...."

This green altar cloth, though it evidently presented difficulties, suggests an interesting Tractarian connection. Frances writes as if it had been despatched from Clewer, near Windsor, and perhaps it was; but it was almost certainly made in London. Beginning with a small rescue home for prostitutes in 1848, the rector of Clewer, Thomas Thellusson Carter, had gone on to found in 1854 a convent of Sisters – the Community of St John the Baptist, Clewer – whose primary object was to enable ex-prostitutes to find a new life, and which had opened branches in several other places, including a London branch in Gower Street. This last branch operated as a School of Church Embroidery, the intention being to provide stability, training and employment, not for ex-prostitutes, but for young women who might otherwise fall into prostitution, and it continued at least into the 1890s. This, rather than the Clewer convent itself, is the likeliest place for the green altar cloth to have been produced. Several factors may have encouraged St Michael's, Maidstone, to commission the altar cloth through the Clewer Sisters. First, there would have been a general principle: the controversial rediscovery of the religious life in the Church of England had created a major division of opinion, and the moving spirits at St Michael's would have wanted to show which side they were on and to support the Sisters' work. Additionally, there is a more personal dimension to explore. On 26<sup>th</sup> November, Canon Carter himself had visited St Michael's and preached at Evensong. Frances, who regularly mentions the sermons she hears but very rarely comments on them, describes this one as "Perfect sermon," but unfortunately

it seems not to survive. Tempting though it would be to imagine her placing the order for the altar-cloth on the spot and sending Carter back to Clewer with it, this would have presented a challenging time-frame for a piece of embroidered needlework made to measure, given that Christmas was then approaching. It is more likely that the order had already been placed, and it is conceivable that the engagement of Carter to preach had in fact arisen out of it. I feel almost sure, indeed, that the commission had its origin in a Scudamore connection. Clewer was not the only place where work among ex-prostitutes was then being done by Anglican nuns. In 1854, a small "House of Mercy", run by the All Hallows Sisters, was founded at Shipmeadow in Suffolk, moving in 1859 to larger premises in Ditchingham, Norfolk. Its founder and first warden was the rector of Ditchingham, William Edward Scudamore - a cousin of Frances' husband Frederick. Carter and William Scudamore would naturally have taken an interest in each other's work, and there is some evidence that they corresponded. Directly or indirectly, it seems probable that the order for the green altar cloth, and possibly the perfect sermon, originated in what the Maidstone Scudamores knew of T T Carter at Clewer through William Scudamore in Norfolk. Certainly Frances noted the price of the altar cloth in her diary - £10.2.6 – which suggests that the commission itself had been the Scudamores' commission, and that they paid the bill.

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### **Sewing has never appealed to me; at one point in my school career I took up Greek to get out of it; though my Greek never amounted to much either.**

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Sewing has never appealed to me; at one point in my school career I took up Greek to get out of it, though my Greek never amounted to much either. Yet the threads I have been able to follow into Mrs Scudamore's needleworking world unite to create a sense that more was going on than the sewing – and, as I observed in a previous article, Mrs Scudamore must have been not only an individual but a type, not prominent in history yet active all over the country, where parishes conceived or reconceived in the wake of the Oxford Movement had got off the ground. She was the wife of a successful man and, compared with the local dressmaker who made her a dress for the County Ball out of 20 yards of black satin chosen in London, she certainly led a privileged life; but as one who did not sew for a living, she shows a conscientious determination, perhaps indeed a sense of accountability, in her contribution to the work of the parish school, in her efforts to make the church needlework express the beauty of holiness, and in the hours she spent with the Needlework Society, supporting its members' efforts to clothe their families and encouraging them to feel part of the life of the new parish. I don't know whether the green altar frontal St Michael's uses today is the one that arrived from Clewer in 1876 – probably not – but I shall think of Mrs Scudamore next time I look at it. **ND**

*Eleanor Relle enjoys researching Mrs Scudamore from the Diocese of Canterbury.*

# ANGELS OVERHEAD - 3



The splendid church of **Weston Zoyland** (Somerset) was rebuilt around 1500 with the help of Richard Bere, last-but-one Abbot of Glastonbury (1493 to 1525). He left his initials behind, on the S transept outside and on one bench-end as well as a shield (1) in the roof, borne by one of the angels who decorate one of the very best tie-beam roofs (2) in the county.





The little village of **North Burlingham** (Norfolk) was rebuilding their church from the mid-15<sup>th</sup> c, with the screen constructed and painted on the very eve of the Reformation (ND Dec. 2007). In his will of 1487, William Rising left 13s. 4d. to the new roof, provide it was started within 3 years, and four

years later Henry Smith left 26s. 8d. to the “new roof”, so we have a very good idea of when it was made. As part of the construction, the hammerbeam roof (3) was of course painted and to this day the angels retain some of their original colouring (4, 5). **ND**



# Baptisms and Confirmations by the Bishop of Beverley at St Leonard and St Jude, Doncaster



## Letter to the Editor

### Mistaken identity

Sir

It was a great pleasure to discover from the caption to the front cover photograph of this month's *New Directions*, that Bishop Hazlewood has the Western Isles amongst his episcopal responsibilities. No doubt he will enjoy the occasional retreat there from the hurly-burly of Sussex.

*Clifford Payton  
Received by email*

*We apologise to the Bishop of Lewes for this mistake.*



**The Loss of Root and Idiom**

A creeping Anglican identity crisis has been evident in various ways for some time. In 1949 Henry McAdoo<sup>(1)</sup> H. R. McAdoo, *The Structure of Caroline Moral Theology* [Longmans, Green and Co. 1949], p. 1.)

claimed that among theologians in the Church of England, there is something strangely unreal in the prevalent neglect of the heritage of Anglicanism. While ‘Barthianism, Thomism and even Counter-reformation thought possesses a following in the English Church ‘... the study of the fathers of Anglicanism receives but a fraction of its rightful need of attention.’ He cites C. W. Dugmore’s *Eucharistic Doctrine in England from Hooker to Waterland* (1942), as an exception. His intention is not to depreciate a wide acquaintance in theology, ranging from patristics to the modern exponents of Continental confessional theology, but the danger of making such study the background to Anglican theology. It results in a loss of root and idiom, and by neglecting those specifically Anglican



doctrine and morality it can be manipulated, controlled and ‘genetically’ modified to harmonize it with politically correct ideology. Anglicanism is reduced to a nominalism, producing deadness in the theology that emerges because it has been conceived outside of the ecclesiological experience, the *sui generis* experience of the Church. This cerebral approach is

are reduced to a utilitarian function as ‘means of grace’ and emptied of any significance in themselves as having a heavenly and earthly component as hypostases of divine life. It results in a failure to reveal the true meaning, the saving and transforming power of the genuine Christian tradition within the context of our present situation, that it may be a consistent critique of, but also an answer to, the values, world-view and way of life that stem from today’s intellectual and spiritual crisis. The style of this theological approach is the product of a culture deeply marked by spiritual crisis in which the spiritual nature and vocation of man is attacked by an extreme secularism that is anthropocentric (J. Maritain, *The Twilight of Civilization*, [London, Sheed and Ward 1946], p. 10.) and whose way of life is no longer shaped and nurtured by the Church. The culture is trying consciously or unconsciously to reduce the Church to values, philosophies and world-views profoundly different from and often totally opposed to, her vision and experience of God, man and life, through the filter of politically correct ideology. It is a culture estranged more and more from its Christian roots that is tempting her to renounce her approach to faith and liturgy, priesthood and parish administration, pastoral ministry, education and mission. This culture seeks development from pure reason as a substitute for the Gospel, so that ‘prayer, evangelical virtues, supra rational truths, sense of sin and of grace and of the Gospel beatitudes, the necessity for self-sacrifice and ascetic discipline, for contemplation, for the means of the Cross are ignored or denied’<sup>1</sup> When governments embody these secular values in law and tell the Church what to believe and how to behave we are at the mercy of an insidious Erastianism. **ND**

**Our Caroline forbears read and used Aquinas and Calvin and studied the spiritual descendants of both, but refused to forget that they were Anglicans, claiming that by their Protestant reforms they had saved and restored the true and primitive Catholic Faith.**

presuppositions latent or expressed in classical Anglican thought and writings, we risk becoming mere theological vagantes. Our Caroline forbears read and used Aquinas and Calvin and studied the spiritual descendants of both, but refused to forget that they were Anglicans, claiming that by their Protestant reforms they had saved and restored the true and primitive Catholic Faith.

This loss of root and idiom is further complicated by some accounts by some, but not every contemporary writer on Anglicanism, in the filtering of it through a Liberal Protestant Scholasticism that reduces it to the conceptual so that in

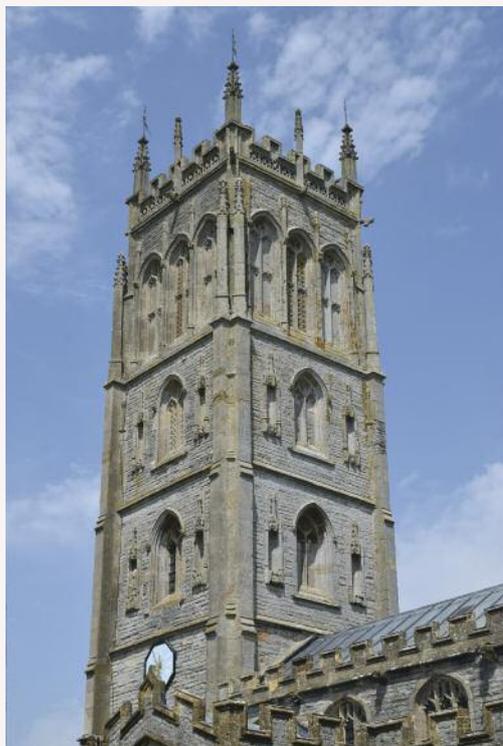
incapable of handling mystical theology and the eschatological dimension of the Church’s experience, the life of the world to come, which always should be a coefficient of the theological enterprise. It is her knowledge and constant partaking of the life of the world to come that relates the Church to the world, creating a correlation between the ‘now’ and the ‘not yet’ which is the essence of her message and is the only ‘victory’ that overcomes the world. (A. Schmemann, *Church World Mission* [SVS Press, New York, 1979], p. 10.)

Without this dimension theology is dead rather than living and Sacraments

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# touching place

## S MARY, WESTON ZOYLAND, SOMERSET



Being Somerset, Weston Zoyland has one of those splendid Perp. towers with niches for statues of saints and pierced stone in the windows. Built of steel-blue lias, this one is a bit taller than most, due to an extra stage, and inside it has the local refinement of a panelled tower-arch. This was part of a rebuilding campaign around 1500, propelled by Richard Bere, last-but-one Abbot of Glastonbury (1493 to 1525), who is commemorated by his initials on the S transept outside and on one bench-end and an angel's shield in the roof. And what an interior. The church was not restored until the mid-1930s (when it badly needed it), by one of the few men who could do it justice, W. D. Caroe. The roof is one of the few to be mentioned in the same breath as Somerton and Martock (ND Oct. 2018), with angels looking down from between the tie-beams upon the late-mediaeval benches below. Caroe designed the screen, topped by the figures of the rood group. As usual for Somerset, the Dec. chancel was not part of the rebuild.



The spacious, clerestoried, nave is not crammed with furnish-

ings, but crammed it was on one night of awful horror, following the Battle of Sedgemoor on July 6<sup>th</sup> 1685, when the Duke of Monmouth's army was routed. Those who survived scattered, if they could; around 500 wounded prisoners were locked in the church for the night. Several were hanged there and then, and five died of their wounds. Sixteen of the royal army were buried at Weston; a thousand and more rebels were buried in pits on Sedgemoor. After Lord Chief Justice George Jeffreys and five other judges sat at the Western Assize, 330 rebels were



hanged and 849 transported; 34 got off 'lightly' with a whipping. The churchwardens paid 5s. 8d. "for Frankinssense and pievey [saltpetre] and resson [resin] and other things to burn in the church after ye prisoners had gone out", but it is doubtful if this fumigation could eradicate the recollection of that dreadful day from peoples' memories.

Map reference: ST352348

Simon Cotton

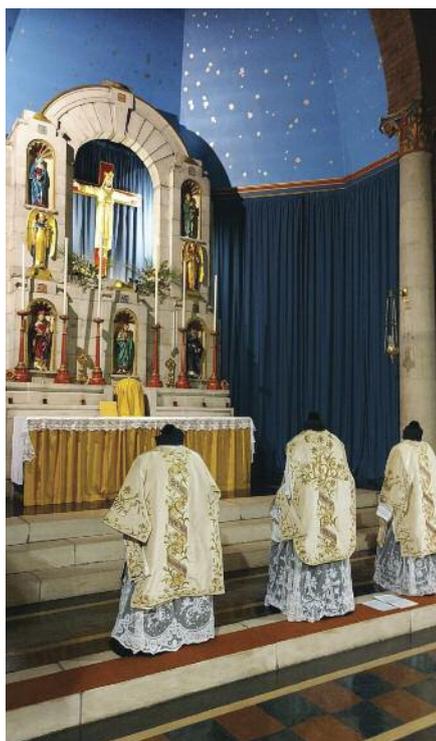


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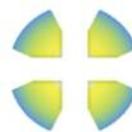
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